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SANDRINGHAM CHURCH

THE KING'S HOMELAND

SANDRINGHAM AND NORTH-WEST NORFOLK

BY

W. A. DUTT

AUTHOR OF

'HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN EAST ANGLIA,' 'THE NORFOLK BROADS,' ETC.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

H. RIDER HAGGARD

CONTAINING
THIRTY-SEVEN FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
MOSTLY FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS
BY GORDON HOME

PUBLISHED FOR THE HOMELAND ASSOCIATION

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

BY H. RIDER HAGGARD

'THE King's Homeland' is a large title, for wherever the flag of Britain flies—that is, over nearly one-quarter of the globe—there is the homeland of King Edward VII.; and there, surely, north and south and east and west, in snows or sands, in cities or in plains, he would find himself as much at home and as much beloved as he is at Sandringham.

Fortunately, the area with which Mr. Dutt and myself are asked to deal is more circumscribed, just the north-west portion of one English county, Norfolk. Yet about that alone how many volumes might be written—King's Lynn, Houghton, Castle Rising, Walsingham (no, I suppose that is over the border of our

district), Sandringham itself and its neighbourhood! One might be given to each of them, to say nothing of other places.

The mere plenitude of the material necessarily leaves the writer of an introduction, who has been warned that brevity is expected of him, in some difficulties of choice; also he has to consider the author of the body of the book, lest he should find himself in the position that once was my own at a missionary meeting. At that meeting I was asked to take the chair and to make an opening speech. Now, I knew something of the country concerned, and had read up more in various reports and histories. Fortified by all this information, I made my speech—I trust not a bad one, though somewhat long, for the subject was large and tempting. When at length I sat down, I observed that the Deputation at my side looked dejected, and expressed the hope that I had said nothing inconvenient or unsuitable.

'No,' he answered, with a sickly smile, 'but

you have gone over *all* the ground. You might have left me a *little bit of it!*'

As I do not wish to repeat this *faux pas*, and earn a like reproof from Mr. Dutt, I think that the best thing I can do will be to confine my remarks within narrow limits, devoting them principally, indeed, to Sandringham, its famous farms, stock, and husbandry.

Sandringham, Blomefield informs us, was called Sant-Dersingham in Domesday Book, the name being compounded of Sand and Dersingham, and meaning, I suppose, the hamlet of the Sand-meadow, as Dersingham means the hamlet or dwelling of the Water-meadow. The house itself, which stands in an estate of about 11,000 acres, is built some three and a half miles from the sea, and from the point known as Sandringham Heights the view is very beautiful, remarkable also for its variety, including as it does heath, woodland, villages, marsh-pastures, meadows, and the wide waters of the Wash. Hence, I believe, can be seen the famous tower

of St. Botolph's, more generally known as Boston Stump, that is so exquisite and light, and yet so majestic to the eye, standing far across the sea in Lincolnshire. At least, I can well remember the water-tower of Sandringham House being pointed out to me when I was walking through the Wainfleet marshes upon the further side of the Wash.

Sandringham, like most other places in this ancient land of ours, has had many owners during the time that its history can be traced. Says Blomefield: 'A free-man in the Confessor's time enjoyed it under Herold, afterwards King of England, but, being ejected at the Conquest, it was bestowed on Robert FitzCorbon, or Corbution.' In the reign of Henry II. one of the same family, William FitzCorbun, or Curcon, seems to have held it, and in that of Edward III. Roger de Sandringham and Alice, his wife, the widow of John Rivet, were interested in its lands, from whom these, or some of them, passed to the Cobbe family by marriage with the heiress of the Rivets.

In the time of Charles I. a Colonel William Cobbe held here the manor of Woodhall. He was very loyal to his King, 'and suffered greatly on that account.' In 1686 his son sold this lordship to Sir Edward Atkins, the Chief Baron of the Exchequer, who conveyed it to James Hoste, Esq., the son of Theodore Hoost, a Dutch merchant of London. It is said that in the old house at Sandringham hung the picture of a poor girl, a member of this family, who, for the crime of being a Protestant, was burnt by Alva at the age of eighteen somewhere in the Low Countries. This anyone who has studied the history of that time, as it has been my lot to do, can easily believe, for youth and innocence were no protection against the devilish cruelty of Alva and his agents. The picture of this child-martyr, I understand, is still in the possession of the Henleys, who represent the Hostes.

The further record of the ownership of these lands by the Motteuxs and the Hon. Spencer Cowper need not be followed in this introduction.

but finally, to the great gain of the district and of Norfolk, they were purchased by the King, then Prince of Wales, the estate thus acquired including the parishes of Sandringham, Babingley, Wolferton, and West Newton, with lands in Appleton and Dersingham. In 1870 the old mansion was pulled down and the new house designed, that fine building which, with some additions and alterations, the visitor sees to-day.

In or about 1770, just 100 years before its erection, Arthur Young, the famous agriculturist, chanced to visit Sandringham, of which he speaks on p. 15, vol. ii., of 'The Farmer's Tour through the East of England.' He says:

'About Sandringham, the seat of Henry Cornish Henley, Esq., are very considerable tracts of sandy land, which are applied at present only to the feeding of rabbits. It is a very barren soil, but not, I apprehend, incapable of cultivation; it lets from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. an acre in warrens. Mr. Henley has tried some experiments on it lately, with a view to discover how

far it will answer cultivating. The value of it is prodigiously advanced by planting. That gentleman has formed several plantations, which thrive extremely; all the firs do well, and will pay a better rent for the land than any husbandry.'

This passage shows how good were the observation and inferences of Mr. Arthur Young, as, were he able to revisit these glimpses of the moon after a lapse of 130 years, he would be the first to testify. During the King's tenure of the estate the planting of larch, Austrian, and Scotch firs has gone on steadily, with the result that it is now beautifully timbered. Of the House I will say nothing; its appearance and attractions are well known, and of the gardens, which appealed to me particularly as a lover of fruit and flowers, and one who takes much personal pleasure in their cultivation, only that they are among the finest and best kept which I ever saw.

About the farming of the property and its agricultural management I have, however, been

asked by the editors of this book to make a few remarks, which, as it chances, I am in a position to do, as when I was preparing the chapter upon 'Norfolk' in my work 'Rural England,' I was very kindly given an opportunity of inspecting the domain. Fortunately, the King himself is a farmer in the true sense of the word, as distinguished from the owner of an estate upon which there are farms.

His agent, Mr. Frank Beck, informed me, indeed, that his Majesty, whose training has been essentially that of an English country gentleman, takes the liveliest personal interest in every detail connected with his land, himself marking trees to be felled, and directing where others should be planted, or superintending the choice of stock, and all questions that have to do with the carrying on of the in-hand lands and the home-farm, which covers, I believe, about 2,000 acres. It is a wonderful farm, for I imagine that nowhere else is so much high-bred stock to be seen upon the same area; at least, in all my extensive journey-

ings throughout the twenty-six counties in England, of which I have examined the agriculture, I have not found its equal.

The land on the estate of course varies. Thus, in Sandringham itself, as its name suggests, it is sandy; to the east, light with a chalk subsoil; and to the west, heavy with much grass. Barley of a good quality is largely grown, but on the light lands little wheat and more oats. Sainfoin, lucerne, and roots are also cultivated.

The glory of the Sandringham farms, however, is their stock. Here are to be found a splendid herd of pedigree shorthorns, and Southdown sheep of the first quality, as the prizes that they take at all the leading shows attest. Red-polls there are also of the best, but these, I believe, are bred by the Prince of Wales. The Sandringham Shire horses are famous—the finest, indeed, that I have seen anywhere. When I visited the farm, there were between seventy and eighty head of them bred from the purest blood in the world.

Of the thorough-breds, the same may be said, if

it is necessary to do so, seeing that they included the two Derby winners, Persimmon and Diamond Jubilee, and fifteen magnificent mares. In addition to these hackneys are also bred. Nor are the shorthorns the only cattle, for with them are herds of Irish Dexters and Jerseys. In fact, it would be interesting to know what is the total value of the stock upon the Sandringham farms. This must be enormous, but, great as is the capital outlay, the probability is that the investment pays, since when the produce of such stock is put upon the market, it commands high prices, and is, of course, much sought after by breeders for the value of its blood.

So far as my experience goes, there are, roughly speaking, two classes of farming which remain remunerative in these depressed and difficult times. The first is that of the small man, who chiefly works his holding by his own labour, with the aid of his family, and thus saves the weekly wages bill. The second is that where large farms are run for a long period of years under syste-

matic and continuous management by able owners, who spare no expense in producing the most perfect animals which can be bred upon the earth, and therefore, whether the seasons or the markets be good or bad, are always certain of finding eager purchasers for their stock, which these desire in order to improve their own in every quarter of the world. The King has appreciated this fact, with the result that the Sandringham farm, that 'very barren soil' of which all that Arthur Young could find to say was that it was not 'incapable of cultivation,' is now a model which might be imitated with advantage to themselves and the country by all who are sufficiently persevering, wealthy, and intelligent so to do.

The remark applies also to matters other than the actual cultivation and stocking of the land. Thus, upon how many properties, even where the expenditure of money need not be considered, is there anything to be found resembling the Sandringham Club, established for the use of all

workmen upon the estate who are above the age of fourteen years? This is not, however, a purely charitable institution, since its members pay a subscription of 1s. a quarter, and also for all refreshments at the time of ordering. Besides the recreation-room, which is provided with papers, etc., there is a surgery attached to the club, and of such an institution all dwellers in the country will know the value.

Again, Her Majesty the Queen has established a technical school, where to such of the young people of the neighbourhood as wish to learn, instruction is given in copper and brass work, joinery and carving, the weaving of tapestry and of the wool of the Sandringham Southdowns into homespun of the most excellent quality. Of the great usefulness and practical worth of a school of this nature the visitor is readily convinced by the excellence of the articles manufactured there. Many a Norfolk lad and lass must have cause in after-life to bless the kind thought which through it led to their being able to earn good livelihoods

as masters of their respective trades, instead of spending their days as followers of the plough, or in domestic service.

Such is a brief outline of what may be seen upon this beautiful Sandringham estate. Many people suppose that it is a purely pleasure property, given up entirely to sport, but no impression could be more erroneous. Of sport there is, indeed, plenty, for, like other things, here the shooting is some of the most excellent and best managed in England. But as I can bear witness, and as the readers of what I have written will, I think, admit, it is carried on also with other and higher objects. Wealth-producing in itself in the best fashion—namely, from what the soil will breed and grow—it affords steady employment and comfort to a considerable number of persons, as well as pleasure and relaxation to its royal owners and their family.

Moreover, it is a beneficent example to all Britain of what can be done by care, forethought, and judicious investment on soil which is not in

itself pre-eminently rich. If all the lands of England were but half as well managed and cultivated; if their natural capacities, whether for the production of grain, grass, and timber, or for the rearing of various classes of stock, could be but half as thoroughly developed and utilized, then I am sure that we should hear but little more of that eternal and lugubrious topic—agricultural depression. Moreover, the country would be a great deal more beautiful to look at, and for all classes, especially the poorest, more satisfactory to live in than it is.

I will conclude these remarks upon Sandringham with a short quotation taken from what I have already written on this subject in 'Rural England. I venture to do so for two reasons: first, because that work is necessarily one which will not have been perused by many of the readers of this book; and, secondly, because I find I cannot better the words that I wrote therein:

'If I may say so with respect, it strikes me as very fortunate for all classes connected with the

land that our Sovereign should be one who from practical experience is able thoroughly to enter into the hopes and fears incident to their various industries and occupations. As a landlord his Majesty is familiar with the trials and difficulties of the owners of estates; as the first of farmers in his realm, he must thoroughly understand and appreciate those of the cultivators of the soil; and as a large employer of labour, which nowhere is more thoughtfully considered than at Sandringham, the needs and details of the lives of the toilers on the land, who still form so considerable a proportion of his subjects in Britain, must be known to him to the last particular.'

In this north-west corner of Norfolk are sundry places of which I should like to say something, did not the list of his chapters, which Mr. Dutt has kindly forwarded, inform me that he has already dealt with them, more ably doubtless than I should be able to do. For instance, there is Castle Rising with its grim and interest-

ing old Norman keep, believed to have been built by William, first Earl of Sussex, the son of William de Albini, 'pincerna,' or butler, to William II. by whom the town and lordship were given to him.

Hence the view is very fine, as anyone who has stood upon those ancient walls will know. Most interesting also are the remains of the castle on its mound, set within the great earthworks raised for purposes of defence by the Saxons, or even earlier folk. Here lived for a number of years (but was *not* imprisoned), Isabella, the 'She-wolf of France,' wife of Edward II. and mother of Edward III., apparently in an odour of sanctity which must have been peculiarly grateful to a lady of her chequered career; and here, by the way, although I have seen it otherwise stated, she did not die. Even in times comparatively modern Castle Rising was still an important place, and until the year 1832, when it was disfranchised, it actually returned two members to Parliament. Strange stories are still

current in the little village, for such it has become since the sea deserted it, as to the manner of their election. To-day Lynn has inherited its glories, for, as says the old verse :

> ' Rising was a seaport town
> When Lynn was but a marsh ;
> Now Lynn it is a seaport town,
> And Rising fares the worse.'

It does, indeed, fare the worse, but not on that account are its prospects the less beautiful or its ancient history and legends the less entrancing. To all travellers to Norfolk I say, whatever else you may neglect, visit the gray pile of Castle Rising.

Then there is the ancient town of Lynn, standing on its flat lands near the sea—Lynn that was a port before the Norman set foot in England, and remains a port, considerably improved, to-day, although perhaps its trade is not what it once was ; Lynn, where King John was royally entertained just before his career, more varied and remarkable even than that of

Queen Isabella, came to its miserable end at Newark Castle.

Are not his alleged gifts—I say 'alleged' advisedly—of cup and sword the principal treasures of the borough to this day and did he not give to it its first charter, whereby it became Lynn Regis—Lynn of the King instead of Lynn Episcopi, Lynn of the Bishop? At least, I presume that the change of name took place then, and not in the time of King Henry VIII., as frequently has been stated, since there is an entry in the Patent and Close Rolls for 1216, which runs: 'At King's Lynn. Know, that we have received in our Chamber at King's Lynn, on the Tuesday next after the feast of St. Dionysius, in the eighteenth year of our reign, 100 marks.' It is true, however, that this entry would seem to suggest that the town was at that time already known as King's Lynn.

It is a much be-chartered city, for in addition to that by which John made it a free borough, it can boast no fewer than eighteen others granted

to it by various monarchs, of whom the last was George II. Also the borough has always held closely to its privileges, a fact whereof I happen to possess a curious proof. There has come down to me a parchment and a printed oath granted to and taken, in the year 1766, by one James Hamilton, an ancestor of my children, which James Hamilton was, I believe, the son of the well-known physician and virtuoso, Dr. Robert Hamilton, of Lynn, who may be read of in the 'Dictionary of National Biography,' vol. xxiv., p. 207. I take this opportunity to print them both, as they strike me as most interesting:

Borough of King's Lynn, in Norfolk.

These are to signify and declare that James Hamilton Gentleman is a free burgess of the said Borough & is so registered in the Guildhall book of the Mayor & Burgesses there Therefore he is & ought to be quit & free in all places of this Kingdom as well by land as by sea of & from all Tolls Lastage

Payage passage pontage Stallage Danegeld & all other customs whatsoever for all his Goods & Chattles according as the Charter of the most Noble King John granted to the Burgesses of the said Borough the fourteenth day of September in the sixth year of his reign doth testify (saving the Liberty of the City of London) by which Charter amongst divers other Grants & Liberties it is prohibited that none do injury damage or molestation or take any Toll or Custom of the said Burgesses contrary to the said Charter under divers forfeitures & penalties therein contained, which Charter hath been since often confirmed by divers Kings & Queens of this realm. Given under my hand & seal of Mayoralty of the said Borough this seventh day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty six.

Wm. Langley, Mayor.

The Oath of Freedom.

Burgh of King's Lynn, Norfolk.

I James Hamilton the Franchies of this Town of Lynn, shall truly maintain to my Power, as well without the Town as within, & obedient be to you Mr. Mayor, & to your Successors Mayors of Lynn; & be aiding & assisting to the Officers of this Town in doing their Office, as Need shall require, & the Counsel of this Town truly keep, & that I shall colour no Bargain or Sale contrary to the Privilege thereof; & that I shall all other Things do that belong to a Burgess to do. So God me help.

Can some antiquary, or other learned person, inform us what is meant by the promise here made by James Hamilton that he 'shall colour no bargain or sale contrary to the privilege' of Lynn? Whatever this may mean, to be quit and free throughout Britain from 'all tolls, lastage, payage, passage, stallage, dangeld,' etc., sounds

a privilege worth having. I wonder if it still belongs to the citizens of Lynn. If for lastage, etc., they could now read 'municipal and county rates,' it would soon become the most popular residential borough in the kingdom. By the way, this declaration would appear to indicate that the town was called King's Lynn long before the end of the reign of John.

At least its quaint and narrow streets should also certainly be seen; further, the visitor might do worse than taste the port wine for which Lynn has been famous for generations.

Many other are the places in North-West Norfolk that our traveller should visit. For instance, there is Houghton, Sir Robert Walpole's vast and melancholy monument. It is a huge palace, and splendid in its way, but I think that what always impressed me most about it is the fact that therein was provided a special chamber for drunken grooms—I think it was called the 'sot-room.' Imagine an establishment conducted on a scale that made such an

apartment a specific necessity! One wonders how many chambers were allotted to the sober grooms, but perhaps of these there were none in those good old, but somewhat intemperate, days. It seems very probable.

The designers of this house in which I write at Ditchingham would appear to have taken an old-fashioned Dutch doll's house as their model, with the result that the main three-storied building, as it left their hands, was an exact square, measuring 40 feet on each face. Now, these, I am told, are the precise measurements of the great hall in Houghton, whence arose the saying that 'Ditchingham House will stand in Houghton's Hall.'

Possibly, though there is no record to show exactly when or by whom this place was built, the two exceedingly dissimilar dwellings were finished at the same time—namely, about 1740—and the fact that the entire fabric of one of them could be fitted into a single apartment of the other struck and remained fixed in the

local imagination. When last I saw this hall at Houghton an ingenious tenant of the mansion had arranged a fox-hunt across it, with a real stuffed fox and a pack of real stuffed hounds galloping after the same. It looked curious in that solemn place, still not otherwise than cheerful where, to my mind, cheerfulness is needed. The famous Horace Walpole, who succeeded his still more famous father on the death of his nephew George, Sir Robert's grandson, seems to have been of much the same opinion, and, indeed, it is easy to understand how Houghton would affect a temperament such as his. See what he writes in that melancholy letter to George Montague:

'Here I am, at Houghton, and alone in this spot where, except two hours last month, I have not been in sixteen years. Think what a crowd of reflections; no Gray and forty churchyards could not furnish so many. No; I know one must feel them with greater indifference than I possess to have patience to put them into verse.

Here I am, probably for the last time of my life, though not for the last time; every clock that strikes tells me I am an hour nearer to yonder church—that church into which I have not yet had courage to enter, where lies that mother on whom I doated, and who doated on me! There are the two rival mistresses of Houghton, neither of whom ever wished to enjoy it. There, too, lies he who founded its greatness, to contribute to whose fall Europe was embroiled—there he sleeps in quiet and dignity.'

In the district of Norfolk with which our pages deal there are sundry other spots whereof I should wish to tell, and persons also, such as that charming heroine of romance, Pocahontas, whose alliance with John Rolfe, of the ancient family which for centuries has dwelt at Heacham, near Hunstanton, makes of her a Norfolk lady as well as an Indian Princess. But my obligation of brevity and Mr. Dutt's headings of chapters warn me off all of them as forbidden

land. Therefore I must conclude this introduction, which I do with an appeal to all our readers.

The society by whom this book was projected is called 'The Homeland Association,' and its objects, I understand, are to encourage knowledge of and love for our native Britain. I am quite certain that few aims could be worthier.

Recently my investigations into the social and agricultural state of England have taken me through a majority of its counties, with the result that I found that they, or, at any rate, all the remoter parts of them, remain, so far as most Englishmen are concerned, practically an undiscovered land. Of the hundreds of thousands of our countrymen who travel, how many ever think it worth while to acquaint themselves with the manifold charms and beauties that are to be found within a short railway journey of London? They are ready to spend great sums and to endure sundry inconveniences in studying all countries except their own, for upon struggling

rural England, where their welcome would be hearty and their superfluous cash most useful, they resolutely turn their backs.

In short, the question put by the Reverend Thomas Fuller in the days of the Commonwealth, 'Knowest thou the rooms of thy own country before thou goest over the limits thereof?' must still by the vast majority of us be answered in the negative. I maintain that this is a mistake, since if visited at the proper times of year no land is more interesting or can present a more varied loveliness. Every little town, every village almost, is connected with some great event or name; each river and field breathes history. The purchaser or inheritor of estate, or farm, or acre looks upon his property and reflects with pride that it belongs to him alone. Yet, did he but know the truth, hundreds have lived on and by it; in the eyes of hundreds it has been precious and familiar. Yes, it is a very churchyard filled with the dust of dead hopes and fears, of struggles and achievements,

which in their sum have made Britain what she is. Scores of those departed have owned or laboured on that fen and heath, that woodland and that valley, while in those ancient houses have dwelt generation upon generation of forgotten men and women.

Yonder church, for instance — it scarcely matters which—around whose walls their bones lie in thousands, was perhaps first the worshipping ground of Druids, or far remoter savages. Human sacrifices even may have been offered here. Then came the Romans and their temples to Venus, Jove, or Hercules, and the Saxons and their Christian Cross. Perhaps the Danes sacrificed here to Odin and to Freya, till on the Common yonder where the Barrows are they lost their lives in desperate battle.

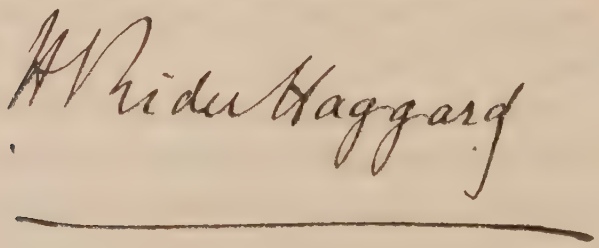
Now the sea-kings and their kin are gone, and once more the Cross arises above the wooden walls, for as yet little stone was used. Then come the conquering Normans; the present stately structure is their handiwork, per-

haps an expiation offered to God in payment for violence and crime and much shedding of the innocent blood. Here through the long melancholy Middle Ages the people gathered for baptism and burial, for prayer and debate, and even for feast and business. On that tower flared the beacon which announced the coming of the Armada laden with soldiers, priests and Spanish fetters, while from its belfry have floated the glad chimes or the heavy tollings which spoke of triumph or defeat; also of the accession or the end of nearly half a hundred kings.

Well, they and those who served them are all dust, and perhaps the past seems far from us in the press of our busy modern life. Yet it is right and fitting that we, its children, should think of it at times and of its changing, forgotten populations, whose labours we inherit and to whose deeds we owe our freedom, our greatness, and our Empire. Where can we do so better than in the old towns and villages or

among the quiet English country-sides, which bore our fathers and shall bear our children ?

Or, to come to the particular instance whereof we treat, where with more satisfaction and advantage than in Norfolk, which gave us Nelson and many another man almost as great, and that to-day can boast of being the chosen homeland of the honoured Chief and Ruler of our vast community and of our fellow-subjects without count throughout the world — his Majesty Edward VII., King of all the Britains ?



DITCHINGHAM, NORFOLK.
September 1, 1904.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCES THE READER TO THE KING'S COUNTRY

THE KING'S HOMELAND

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCES THE READER TO THE KING'S COUNTRY

That part of North-West Norfolk which is bounded on the west by the Wash wears an aspect very unlike what the majority of visitors to Norfolk expect to find there. For to tell a stranger to the county that its surface is not everywhere an almost level plain is in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred to excite surprise, if not incredulity. Probably the reason is that strangers to the greater part of Norfolk—not including the neighbourhood of Cromer—naturally think of it as the county containing the Broads district, and being familiar, as they can hardly help being, with at least some artist's

depiction of the Dutch-like marshlands which border the Broads, the idea of an entirely flat country is the first to suggest itself. Yet even a famous geologist has declared that the scenery of one part of North-West Norfolk nearly approaches that of the Downs; and anyone who has traced that ancient road, Peddar's Way, across the western part of the county, or has spent a day or two in rambling about the heaths of Breckland, needs no assuring that flatness and monotony are far from being characteristic of the whole of Norfolk scenery.

In North-West Norfolk there are miles of country as flat as land well can be, for that division of the county includes the area of reclaimed fen called Marshland; but the north-western portion with which we are now concerned has the charm of much variety of scenery. This portion lies between the towns of King's Lynn and Hunstanton, and its bounds will readily be ascertained by the reader who examines a map of North-West Norfolk, and confines his attention to an imaginary triangle having two of its angles at Lynn and Hunstanton, and the third at Houghton, a village about

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three miles north of Massingham Station, on the Lynn and Fakenham line. Within the limits of this district is contained a portion of a line of chalk hills extending across the county from Hunstanton to Thetford; fairly large heathlands, which have never been brought under cultivation; a picturesque river valley, the lower part of which was formerly filled by an arm of the sea; parks containing some grand old oaks, dating from a time when a considerable portion of the district was a royal deer-park; plantations extensive enough to justify the statement that the district is well wooded; a small tract of land swampy enough to be called a fen; and some wide stretches of marshland which have been reclaimed from the sea. In addition to these, there is along the coast, outside the banks which have been made to protect the marshes, a great deal of salt-marsh and some wide expanses of mud-flat, forming part of the Wash.

Needless to say, a district having so varied a surface has not that monotonous aspect usually ascribed to the county as a whole. On the contrary, it possesses as delightful scenery as the blending of the above-mentioned features can

create. Along its coast-roads the traveller has on one side pleasant lowlands, bordered by sandy beaches or salt marshes, and on the other wooded uplands or undulating cornfields. He crosses heaths which in spring are ablaze with gorse blossoms and in autumn purple with heather, and he passes through bird-haunted woodlands and picturesque villages. Journeying inland, he finds himself on yet other heathlands—tawny tracts of bent and bracken which have known no changes, other than the seasons bring, since the days of prehistoric man—and he is brought in touch with some of the stateliest homes of England. Whether he be botanist, ornithologist, entomologist, or archæologist, he can almost everywhere pursue his favourite study or pastime with pleasure and profit; or if his aim be simply to enjoy a holiday which will bring him renewed health, and provide him with recollections of pleasant days and scenes, this part of North-West Norfolk is not likely to disappoint him.

As regards the geology of North-West Norfolk and its influence on the local scenery, some interesting remarks have been made by Mr. H. B. Woodward, F.R.S., the distinguished geologist.

In Norfolk generally the oldest geological deposits present have little influence on the scenery; but, as Mr. Woodward points out, 'the earliest, known as the Kimeridge Clay, is exposed on the western margin of the county, below the Greensand hills of Sandringham, forming a low-lying tract that merges into the alluvial flat of the Fenland. This formation, which may underlie a considerable portion of Norfolk, consists chiefly of a marine clay. Much of it was probably brought into the sea by rivers, along whose banks many huge reptiles disported themselves, and some of these, borne into the deep for our ultimate benefit, have been immortalized under the names of Omosaurus, Cetiosaurus, and Plesiosaurus. The nearest land in those days may have been in what is now the eastern portion of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. The succeeding formation of Lower Greensand (Neocomian), which rises in the picturesque hills at Snettisham, Dersingham, and Wolferton, tells also of the dominion of the sea, and is of much later date than the Kimeridge Clay. It comprises sandy and clayey sediments, enclosing here and there remains of Ammonites, Oysters,

Trigonias, and other shellfish. Occasionally hardened by ferruginous waters into what is called "carstone," it gives a character to the houses and churches of the neighbourhood, and is even vulgarly spoken of as "gingerbread-stone."'

Although the chalk is by far the most important formation present in Norfolk, it has little influence on the scenery of the county except in the west, where it is only thinly covered with subsequent deposits. Over a considerable portion of the area dealt with in this book the subsoil is chiefly chalk. Mr. Woodward is of the opinion that at one time there may have been land 1,000 feet high in West Norfolk, and then 'the chalk was continuous with that which now forms the wolds of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire'; but in this district the upper part of the formation has been removed by denudation. This denudation has made the surface of the chalk one of gentle undulations. At Hunstanton there is a famous chalk cliff about 60 feet high, where the oldest part of the chalk, the red rock, can be seen.

Of late years considerable areas of land have

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been reclaimed from the Wash; but there is evidence proving that since the time when England last became separated from the Continent, and the conditions of the land became approximately the same as those which now obtain, a loss of land has been sustained along the coast of North-West Norfolk. This evidence is found in the existence off the coast of the submerged remains of a large forest, extending from Brancaster Bay across the Wash to the neighbourhood of Grimsby. 'This now submerged tract,' wrote the late Rev. G. Munford, 'was once inhabited by herds of deer and oxen, as is evident from the remains of their horns and bones which have occasionally been found there; the foot of man has also trodden these now hidden wastes, for works of art have been met with, buried with the forest beneath the waves.' On one occasion, when there was an exceptionally low ebb-tide, Mr. Munford and a friend succeeded in reaching this submarine forest, which was met with about one and a half miles from high-water mark, and about two miles north of Hunstanton. The explorers found it to consist of numberless large trees and branches, many of

them decomposed, and so soft that they might easily have been penetrated by a spade. 'These vegetable remains,' wrote Mr. Munford, 'are now occupied by an immense colony of living pholades and other molluscs, and lie in a black mass of vegetable matter, which seems to be composed of the smaller branches, leaves, and plants of undergrowth. . . . Many of the trees, however, are quite sound, and still fit for domestic purposes; and, indeed, they are sometimes used by the proprietors of the neighbouring land for posts and rails.'

* * * * *

Visitors to this part of Norfolk, however thoroughly they may explore it, are bound to have their interest centred upon one spot, and that is Sandringham; for upon Sandringham the attention of the nation has been centred ever since the day—now more than forty years ago—when the estate passed into the possession of the Prince who is now England's King. The fact of Sandringham House having a royal owner would alone account for this; but it is something more which has made the name of Sandringham familiar throughout, not only the country, but

the Empire. Windsor Castle and Marlborough House must always claim the interest of Englishmen, for their associations are of regal dignity; but in Sandringham their interest is warmer—it has a place in their hearts. For the King, when he is at Sandringham, is content to lay aside some measure of his regality. His life here is that of an English country gentleman—a squire of the best type. And into that life his subjects in all parts of the world may enter so far as it is possible to permit them. Year after year visitors have enjoyed the delights of the lovely grounds and gardens, seen the royal stables and kennels, and had ample opportunities of judging for themselves how thoroughly the various members of the Royal Family not only enter into the pleasures, but also carry out the duties, of the position they have voluntarily assumed. As a natural result, Sandringham has come to be looked upon as the real home of the King and Queen, and there are many of their subjects who boast of having seen for themselves the charming and interesting surroundings of that ideal home.

Sandringham and its neighbourhood — the King's Homeland—has been made the subject of

this volume. To do anything like justice to such a subject is impossible; but in the hope of being able to point out such things as will enable the reader to find out others for himself, I ask him to accompany me for a while into North-West Norfolk. He will doubtless see many things which I shall fail to notice, and I cannot hope that in everything I say he will agree with me; but we shall, I trust, be genial fellow-travellers, and it is possible that now and again I may mention some interesting fact or tell some story which will be new to him, and which will help to beguile us on our way.

And here it may be as well to indicate the precise situation of Sandringham, and convey some idea of how it can best be reached, and what sort of accommodation the neighbourhood provides for a visitor who spends a few days in it.

Roughly speaking, Sandringham is in the centre of the district dealt with in this book. It is about 106 miles from London by road; $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Lynn; $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Hunstanton; $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Wolferton Station, on the Lynn and Hunstanton branch of the Great Eastern Railway; and $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Hillington Station,

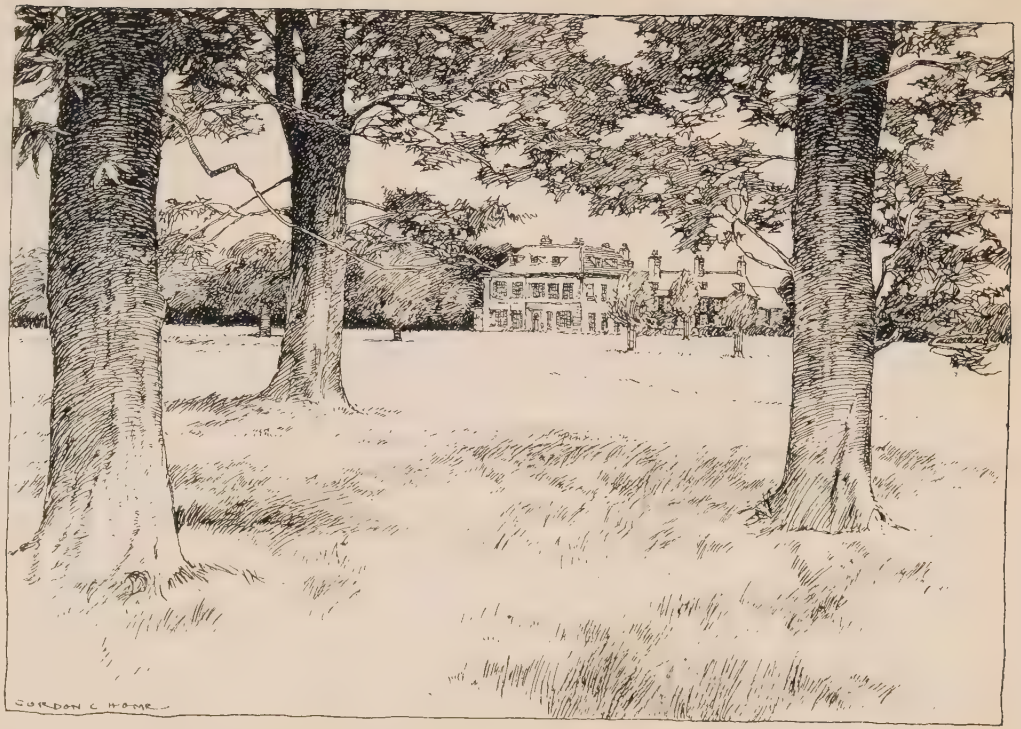
on the Lynn and Fakenham section of the Midland and Great Northern Railway. Visitors who can only spend a day in the district, and who wish to devote that day to Sandringham and its immediate neighbourhood, should travel by rail to Wolferton or Hillington Station, unless they happen to be staying in Lynn or Hunstanton, in which case the road journey is greatly preferable. To visitors staying in Norwich, Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Cromer, and the Broads district Sandringham is easily accessible, and during the summer excursion tickets are issued at frequent intervals to Wolferton and Hillington from several stations in East Anglia. The gardens and grounds at Sandringham are usually open to the public on Wednesdays, tickets for admission being obtainable from Mr. F. Beck, at the Estate Office, West Newton.

But the neighbourhood of Sandringham is not one to be explored in a day. For visitors there are three places conveniently situated as starting-places from which daily rambles, rides, or drives into the district can be taken. These places are Lynn, Hunstanton, and Dersingham. At the two first-named towns there are several comfort-

able hotels, and Hunstanton, being a popular watering-place, possesses, of course, many lodging and boarding houses. The visitor who prefers to make Dersingham his centre has the advantage of being within a few minutes' walk of Sandringham. The accommodation in the village is naturally limited; but there are three or four inns where visitors are well attended to. Of these the principal are the Feathers and the Coach and Horses.

In Sandringham and its immediate neighbourhood there is, as I hope to make clear, enough interest to fill up the hours of two or three long summer days; but there are several other places in the district which the visitor should not fail to see. Chief of these is Castle Rising, famous for its grand Norman castle, the equally interesting Norman work of its church, and its quaint old bede-house. Then there is Houghton Hall, that magnificent house built by Sir Robert Walpole, the great Prime Minister; and, on the way to it, Anmer Hall, once the home of Father Walpole, the martyred Jesuit priest, whose story is told by Dr. Jessopp in his 'One Generation of a Norfolk House.' In another direction Heacham

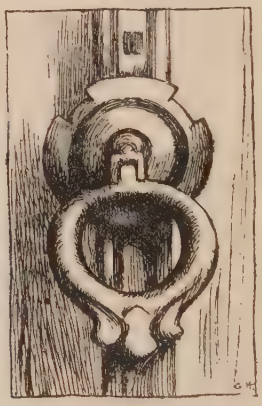
HEACHAM HALL FROM THE PARK


GORDON C HOME

Hall claims attention as having been for many generations the seat of the Rolfes, one of whom was that early colonist of Virginia who married Pocahontas, the daughter of the Redskin chief Powhatan. In several of the churches there is much that is interesting, especially in those at Sandringham, Wolferton, Heacham, Dersingham, and Snettisham, the last-named being especially noteworthy for its fine west front. There is a ruined church at Babingley, too, to which unusual interest attaches owing to an ancient tradition that it occupies the site of the first Christian church erected in East Anglia.

Apart from an occasional reference, it is not proposed to deal with Hunstanton and Lynn in this book, except in so far as to say here that the fact of the former having during the last fifty years grown from an obscure village into one of the most popular watering-places on the Norfolk coast is a sufficient testimony to its attractiveness, while in regard to the latter, it is an ancient town ranking third in size and population in the county, and well worthy of a visitor's attention. Its chief features from the tourist's point of view are two fine churches, one of which contains two

of the finest brasses in England; the Red Mount Chapel, a remarkably small but beautiful example of fifteenth-century architecture; the Greyfriars Tower; the old South Gate; and a picturesque seventeenth-century Custom house.



COMBINED HANDLE AND KNOCKER ON THE DOOR UNDER THE ARCHWAY OF HEACHAM MILL
(THE DOOR BEARS THE DATE 1577)

CHAPTER II

SOME REMARKS ON THE DISTRICT IN PREHISTORIC, ROMAN, AND SAXON TIMES

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In a later chapter, and in connection with the story of Sandringham, I shall have occasion to make some reference to the history of North-West Norfolk from the Norman Conquest to the present day. Preceding the Norman period, however, there were historic periods and prehistoric ages of which North-West Norfolk has produced many relics and retains some interesting traces. To treat of these relics and traces incidentally, in connection with the different parishes as I have to describe them, would scarcely enable the reader to understand the interest and significance attaching to some of them; so I think I can hardly do better than devote a short chapter to them.

In his great work on the 'Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain' Sir John Evans has recorded that in 1884 Mr. W. H. Houghton discovered in the river-drift gravels of a side valley leading into the marshes at South Wootton —a parish about two and a half miles south by east of Lynn—a tongue-shaped Palæolithic implement showing signs of use near the point. The reader who has even a slight acquaintance with what has been written concerning the Stone Age inhabitants of this country will know that great interest must attach to any artificially shaped stone implement found in such a situation. He will know that its presence there means that at a time incalculably remote, when Britain still formed a part of the continent of Europe, there were human inhabitants of North-West Norfolk.

Our first glimpse into the remote past of the district, which has in Sandringham its centre of interest, reveals that district to us therefore, inhabited by some of the earliest human beings—unless we admit the Eolithic men of some archæologists—of whose handiwork recognisable relics have as yet been discovered. Under what condi-

tions those Early Stone Age inhabitants existed here it is hard to say ; but the finding elsewhere in England of Palæolithic implements in deposits containing the remains of the hippopotamus, two species of elephant and rhinoceros, a cave bear, a cave lion, the hyæna, bison, wild horse, and reindeer, suggests that these early inhabitants of our country led a life in many ways resembling that of the uncivilized tribes who inhabit lands overrun by dangerous and ferocious wild beasts. Palæolithic man was a hunter rather than a cultivator of the ground. He clothed himself, in all probability, in the skins of the animals he killed with a flint-headed spear, and of their bones, after he had scraped the flesh from them, he made certain tools. He was short in stature, but powerfully built. He had a low receding forehead, with beetling brows, a prognathous jaw, and fang-like canine teeth. The female sharer of his cave and fortunes was equally attractive in appearance.

How long the Palæolithic or Early Stone Age lasted, and when the Neolithic, Surface, or Later Stone Age began, no one can say definitely ; but, so far as Britain is concerned, it seems evident

that a very long time elapsed between the end of the former period and the beginning of the latter. By the time that Neolithic man arrived in this country Great Britain had become an island, differing only slightly in shape and extent from what it is to-day. Several of the wild beasts which had roamed the woods and plains in the Early Stone Age had become extinct, while others had migrated to distant lands before the land-link with the Continent was severed. Flint was still the substance most in demand for the making of implements for domestic use and weapons for the chase, for metals, or, rather, the use of them, had not been discovered. But the stone implements of Neolithic man were often of far more skilful workmanship than those of the Early Stone Age, and many of them were perfectly shaped and polished by grinding. Man had by this time learnt to tame certain animals, some of which he trained to assist him in hunting, others, perhaps, to guard his home and help him till the ground. He knew how to weave material for clothing; he had learnt the art of making pottery; he ground or crushed his corn with a kind of pestle and mortar; and he dwelt

either in a turf-roofed hut or a wooden lake-dwelling. When he died he was buried in what is called by archæologists a 'long barrow,' to distinguish it from the round barrow, which, in consequence of the latter frequently containing bronze implements, is assigned to a later period. In this long barrow he was interred in a crouching attitude, probably because he was accustomed to sleep in that position. As Mr. Andrew Lang says of Neolithic man:

> 'He buried his dead with their toes
> Tucked up, an original plan,
> Till their knees came right under their nose—
> 'Twas the manner of Primitive Man.'

During this period several parts of Norfolk must have been thickly populated, especially the south-west corner of the county, where Neolithic implements have been found in great numbers. In North-West Norfolk they are nothing like so abundant, and from several districts are almost entirely absent, owing to the soil containing little or no stone suitable for the making of such implements, but enough have been found to indicate that Later Stone Age man was established here.

On Massingham Heath, which borders the road from Lynn to Fakenham between Grimstone and Great Massingham, Dr. C. B. Plowright, of Lynn, has discovered traces of Neolithic flint-working and flint-quarrying, and he has also succeeded in locating the site of a village or settlement which may have been occupied by a Neolithic people. The site is indicated by some hut circles practically identical in character with those which have been examined by Mr. Worthington G. Smith on Dunstable Downs.

In several other North-West Norfolk parishes Later Stone Age implements have been found; but what is probably the most interesting relic of the period recorded for this neighbourhood is a polished axe of brown flint, which is said to have been discovered by the Rev. George Munford in the submarine forest referred to in the first chapter. This axe is now in the Castle Museum at Norwich. Mr. Hamon le Strange has recorded that in January, 1903, a beautifully worked javelin head was found in a brickyard at Heacham; and Mr. W. G. Clarke has met with Neolithic worked flints at Anmer and Fring. At the latter place he found a remarkable axe:

it had been originally worked in Palæolithic times, and afterwards picked up by a Neolithic flint-worker and rechipped into a serviceable implement.

In the district we are dealing with there are several round barrows. Such barrows, as has already been stated, are now assigned to a later period than that of Neolithic man, many of them in various parts of the kingdom having been found to contain bronze implements. In the parishes of Anmer and Harpley, which lie between Sandringham and Houghton, there are groups of barrows, while other groups or isolated mounds are to be seen in the parishes of Bircham and Flitcham. Some archæologists have suggested that there is some connection between these barrows and a very ancient road—Peddar's Way—with which we shall deal presently. 'Flitcham Bury,' now demolished, was a barrow on which the hundred court was formerly held. If these barrows are correctly assigned to the Bronze Age, and the approximate dates of that period may be accepted, they are probably between 3,000 and 4,000 years old. Implements of the Bronze Age have been discovered at Castle

Rising and Snettisham. An old and curious record of the Snettisham finds is as follows:

'At this place various brass instruments have been dug up in the shape of hatchet-heads, with handles to them. These are usually called celts, but as to their uses antiquaries are by no means agreed. Thoresby thinks they are the heads of British spears, and Hearne supposes them to have been Roman chisels.'

It has been the aim of several writers on Roman Norfolk to establish a connection between the Roman fort (*Branodunum*) at Brancaster and the ancient road I have just referred to. This road crosses the county from the neighbourhood of Thetford, on the Suffolk border, to that of Holme, on the North Norfolk coast, and it bisects the road from Sandringham to Houghton between a common called Anmer Mink and a similar piece of waste land known as Harpley Common. On any good road-map of Norfolk Peddar's Way can be distinguished at once by the straight course it takes between Castleacre —a village famous for its immense earthworks and picturesque ruins of a Cluniac priory—and the village of Fring, about two miles south-west

of Docking. Some writers have disputed the assertion that this road runs right up to the coast at Holme; but Mr. E. Milligen Beloe, F.S.A., who has devoted much time to tracing it, confidently asserts that it does so, and Mr. W. G. Clarke, who is well acquainted with the ancient trackways of Norfolk, tells me that he, too, has succeeded in tracing it to the coast. Owing to its direct course across the county, it is generally considered to be a Roman road; but the fact of its general tendency being towards a point some miles westward of *Branodunum* instead of directly towards that important Roman station lends some support to the claims which have been made for its having been originally a prehistoric trackway. Mr. Milligen Beloe is firmly convinced of its being pre-Roman.

With the greater part of Peddar's Way we have nothing to do here; but as the road crosses a portion of the King's estate, it may be interesting to trace a few miles of its course after leaving the coast. At Holme, according to Mr. Milligen Beloe, the 'head of the Way' is protected by two guarded enclosures, divided by a bank with two large moats on either side. From there it runs

southward up a range of hills to Ringstead, and soon asserts itself in Neats Ling, 'a green road with hedges.' It is then 'lost for a time in the fields, but was perfect in 1797, when Milne made his map.' It reappears in the hamlet of Littleport, in Sedgeford, where it is crossed by the Docking road. 'The enclosures have erased it here for some two miles, except beside a plantation, where its side does duty for the fence-bank till it reaches Fring Cross.' At Fring a fine view of the road is obtained as it runs across the chalk downs to Anmer, where there is an earthwork consisting of a circular mound and dyke. On Anmer Mink and Bircham Heath there are several barrows. Beyond Anmer the road skirts the Houghton Hall estate, and at its crossing of the Harpley Road we may leave it. Just at this point one of the finest barrows along the road is to be seen by the traveller who is tracing the old road, or journeying by road from Sandringham to Houghton.

That Peddar's Way was the chief highway of the district in Roman times there can be little doubt. The author of 'The Roman Roads of Britain'—who is a civil engineer, and has person-

ally examined the roads he deals with in his book —says of Peddar's Way: 'It has all the characteristics of Roman laying-out, and is, indeed, the best-preserved Roman road in East Anglia.' But it is not at all unlikely that the Romans, in making this 'ridge road,' adopted the course of an already existing trackway, to which the numerous barrows to be seen along the road had some relation. That the road should be so well preserved is rather remarkable, seeing that for centuries there has been only one fair-sized village connected with it; but if it is, as it seems to be, a continuation or branch of the Icknield Way—which it is said to join a few miles from Thetford—a theory advanced by the Rev. E. A. Dowman may help to explain its good preservation. Mr. Dowman writes:*

'Peddar's Way seems to be a continuation of Icknield Way, which runs from the two old fair-hills of St. Ann and St. Martin, near Pewsey in Wiltshire . . . and, so far as I have got, this Way seems to have been an old sheep-drove from one market or fair to another, the shepherds feeding their sheep slowly, taking some

* In a letter to the author.

months to get from Norfolk to Wilts; but this theory wants working out.'

Icknield Way was undoubtedly used in comparatively recent times as a drove road, and Mr. W. G. Clarke informs me that it was also used for the transport by packhorses of produce of the East Anglian looms.

There was a time—not long ago—when there was a very manifest disposition on the part of archæologists to hold the Romans responsible for the construction of most, if not all, of the earthworks in Norfolk, so it is not surprising that in several books of local topography not wholly out of date reference is frequently made to Roman 'camps' and 'stations.' Increased knowledge of the Roman methods of castrametation has resulted in most of these earthworks being now assigned to later periods than that in question, and we can no longer look upon the huge earthern ramparts of Castle Rising as the work of some Roman proprætor. Nor are we disposed to accept without question the assertion made by the Rev. J. H. Broome* in 1865, that

* 'Houghton and the Walpoles,' by the Rev. J. H. Broome (1865).

there was a Roman watch-tower on Bircham Heath. Mr. Broome writes:

'On the highest point of this heath, . . . commanding a view of the country six miles round, the remains of a Roman watch-tower are distinctly visible. Fragments of Roman pottery, and also the peculiar Roman brick, have been dug up from the ground-floor. The tower was circular, covering a paved area of 17 feet, the entrance south, through solid flint masonry, the mortar quite indurated in the lapse of so many centuries. The whole site of the tower, disclosing 2 feet of its foundations, has been cleared.'

That there was one important Roman fort a few miles north-east of Sandringham is a well-established fact, for on Rack or Wreck Hill, at Brancaster, there are still to be seen some traces of the Roman *Branodunum*. This station was the most northerly of a line of military posts constructed in the fourth century for the defence of the south and east coasts against the attacks of Saxon invaders. It was garrisoned, according to the Notitia, by a regiment of Dalmatian cavalry under the command of an officer known

as the Count of the Saxon Shore. Its site is now marked only by fragments of brick and pottery, and a certain elevation of the ground; but it is said to have been a fort 570 feet square, with entrances on the east and west sides. Excavation has revealed that its north-east angle was rounded, and contained a small quadrangular building, and that the walls were 11 feet thick. Among the relics which have been found on the spot are a statuette of Mercury, a ring, Samian ware, and coins. Roman relics have also been found at Fring. In 1879 some Roman urns were dug up at Hunstanton, and a few years ago a pair of quern-stones, which may be Roman, were unearthed at Ken Hill in Snettisham, and are preserved by Sir Edward Green in his house on Ken Hill.

Coming now to the Saxon period, we may omit all reference to the Kings who reigned over East Anglia before Sigebert, for we have nothing to show that during their reigns anything happened in which North-West Norfolk was particularly concerned. While Sigebert was King, however, a very important event occurred. As has been mentioned in the first chapter, it was

on what is now a part of the royal estate that, if tradition speaks truly, Felix of Burgundy landed and established the first Christian church in East Anglia. To this event some reference will be made when we come to deal with the parish of Babingley. Another local tradition has to do with Edmund, the Martyr King of East Anglia. This tradition, which originated in the statement of a monkish chronicler, is to the effect that it was at Hunstanton that Edmund landed when, having been nominated by Offa as his successor, he came soon after the death of that King into East Anglia. But King Edmund is the hero of so many incredible tales that, although we can easily decide that most of them are fables, we cannot always tell exactly where truth ends and fiction begins. Hunstanton, however, has for a long time claimed to be the first English soil on which Edmund set foot, and near the lighthouse, on Hunstanton Cliff, some fragments of masonry are still pointed out as being those of a chapel which Edmund founded as a thank-offering for escape from shipwreck off the coast.

That the Saxon inhabitants of North-West

Norfolk had their share of the hardships entailed by the frequent incursions of Danish or Norse raiders into East Anglia no one can doubt, but no account of any battle fought in the district has come down to us. Lynn is said to have been a port at which, on more than one occasion, the invaders landed, and in some of the place-names of the neighbourhood there is evidence of Norse or Danish origin. But the latter point to the existence of Norse or Danish settlements rather than to conflicts. Mr. Milligen Beloe is inclined to believe that Northmen established themselves in North-West Norfolk in pre-Roman times, and that to those early settlers is attributable the northern nomenclature prevailing here. 'The raids and conquests of the Northmen's army after 800,' he writes,* 'came too late to change the names of the townships. The country had then long been conquered and governed by the Angles, and its nomenclature fixed.'

* 'The Padder's Way,' by E. M. Beloe, F.S.A. (1896).

CHAPTER III

DESCRIBES THE ROAD FROM HUNSTANTON TO SANDRINGHAM

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DESCRIBES THE ROAD FROM HUNSTANTON TO SANDRINGHAM

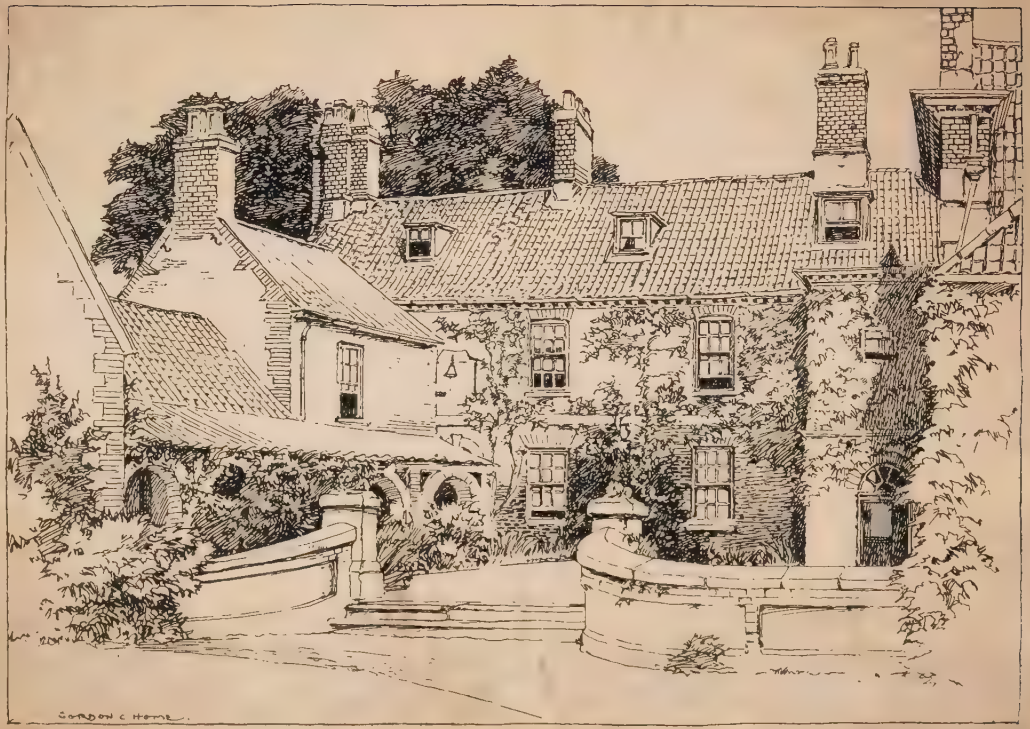
In all probability ninety-nine of every hundred persons who visit North-West Norfolk with the view of availing themselves of the privilege of seeing the gardens and grounds surrounding the King's Norfolk home approach the royal estate by way of Hunstanton or Lynn. For from either of these towns Sandringham is easily accessible, the rail journeys to Wolferton, Dersingham, and Hillington Stations being of about a half-hour's duration, while the road journeys are along excellent highways. The traveller who starts from Lynn by road passes through Castle Rising, which owes to its grand old castle, fine Norman church, and quaint and venerable bede-house the fact that it is one of the most

interesting villages in East Anglia, and he approaches Sandringham through a very delightful country; but Lynn, though an ancient, historical, and interesting town, is nothing like so popular with Norfolk's summer visitors as Hunstanton, which in a comparatively few years has grown from an unimportant village into one of the most attractive watering-places on the East Coast. So, as a start must be made from somewhere, one can, I think, hardly do better than set out from Hunstanton by the coast-road to Sandringham and Lynn.

For the convenience of the traveller, it should be stated at the outset that the distance from Hunstanton to Sandringham is about nine miles.

Hunstanton has grown a good deal during the last forty years both in popularity and area, and it is still growing in every direction where the sea does not constitute a limit of extension; but at present a few minutes' stroll takes the traveller beyond its southern boundary, and he finds himself on an upland highway, from which a good view of the sea can be had as it gleams in the sunlight beyond some low-lying ground on the right. For about half a mile the road keeps to

THE OLD PORTION OF HEACHAM HALL


GORDON C HOME.

the high land, and then descends a rather steep hill, at the top of which a warning to cyclists should be regarded by travellers a-wheel who do not wish to come to grief somewhere in the neighbourhood of an ancient moss-grown stone bridge which spans a small stream at the foot of the hill. Over the marshy ground bordering this streamlet a few lapwings are generally wheeling and wailing, and while the traveller can still hear their plaintive cries, he comes in sight of a picturesque old house standing a little way back from the road on the right. This is Heacham Manor House, the residence of Mr. G. B. M. Browne. It is an ivy-grown house with octagonal red-brick chimneys, and surrounding its delightful old garden there are the remains of a moat. At the back of the house, in some meadowland, there are some curious mounds, which look as though they might cover ancient masonry, and local tradition has it that these are Roman remains. But if there is masonry under the mounds it is probably the foundations of a monastic house, for formerly there was a small Cluniac priory at Heacham, which was a cell to Lewes Abbey, and dedicated to St. Mary.

About two hundred yards beyond the Manor House there is a fine old elm—or, rather, three elms united at the base of their trunks—by the roadside; and a little further along, on the same side of the road, the entrance to Heacham Park is reached, the Hall coming in sight almost directly after. The latter is a substantially built red-brick house, showing few external marks of the antiquity which can safely be assigned to some parts of it not visible from the road.

Heacham Hall is now the residence of Mr. C. E. Strachan, but for many generations it was the seat of the Rolfes, one of whom, Thomas—commonly called John—Rolfe, went out to Virginia with Sir Thomas Dale, an early Governor of the colony, and took to wife Pocahontas, the daughter of the Indian chief Powhatan. The story of that beautiful Indian girl is well known; but the interest aroused by her arrival in England and reception at Court gave rise to so many curious tales that it is not easy to decide how much truth there is in what has been told about her. Even when quite a child she seems to have had a tender spot in her heart for Englishmen, and during the conflicts

between the natives and colonists of Virginia she is said to have done her best to protect such Englishmen as fell into the red men's hands. Henry Spelman, a son of the famous Elizabethan antiquary, who was born at Congham, a village about seven miles north-east of Lynn, is said to have been protected by her; and the redoubtable Captain John Smith, for whom she is recorded to have had a strong affection, wrote that 'that blessed Pocahontas, the great king's daughter of Virginia, oft saved my life.' Her friendliness for Englishmen, however, did not save her from being brought forcibly as a hostage to Jamestown, and it was there she became acquainted with Thomas Rolfe, who petitioned the Governor of the colony to be allowed to make 'this poor heathen woman' his wife. Consent to this having been granted, and that of the redskin chief Powhatan obtained, the marriage took place in the church at Jamestown.

For three years Rolfe and his bride remained in Virginia, the former engaged in the cultivation of tobacco for the English market; then they sailed for England. The arrival in London of the 'beautiful Indian Princess,' as Pocahontas

was called, caused a considerable sensation, and wherever she went she was the centre of curious interest. She had the honour of being presented to King James I. and his Queen, and, as one of the earliest Red Indian converts to Christianity, she was cordially welcomed and entertained by the Bishop of London. For a time she seemed delighted with the novelty of her surroundings, but after a while her health began to decline. Contemporary gossip attributed this to her meeting Captain John Smith, whom she is said to have believed to be dead; but it is more probable that the uncongenial climate of England was responsible for her loss of health. Amid the smoke and fog of London she must often have longed to be breathing again the pure air of her native woods, to be watching the red squirrel leaping from tree-top to tree-top and the blue jay flitting among the pines, while the laugh of the loon came from the lake and the rich notes of the oriole from amid the summer leaves.

It soon became plain that if her life was to be saved she must return to the land of her fathers, and, realizing this, her husband took her on board

POCAHONTAS, DAUGHTER OF POWHATAN

From the only contemporary portrait at Booton, Norfolk.

MATOAKA ALS REBECCA FILIA POTENTISS. PRINC. POWHATANI IMP. VIRGINIÆ.
Ætatis suæ 21. An.
1616.

a ship lying at Gravesend on the eve of its sailing for Virginia ; but before the ship had weighed anchor the young Princess—she was only twenty-two years old—was dead. She was buried in the parish church at Gravesend on March 21, 1616. But the church was destroyed by fire in 1727, and since then the site of her grave has not been known ; but her features are preserved to us in a portrait which was for many years in the possession of the Elvins, a family descended from the Rolfes of Tuttington in Norfolk. Of the Rolfes themselves there are several old portraits in Heacham Hall, which now belongs to Mr. Holcombe Ingleby, a descendant of the Rolfes on the female side.

The name of Ingleby reminds me that it is to Mr. Holcombe Ingleby we are indebted for having placed on record an interesting account of some of the cures effected by a local wart-charmer. According to Mr. Ingleby, who lately resided at the Hall, the wart-doctor's mode of procedure was as follows:

'The patient has to tell the exact number of the warts troubling him, and is then bidden not to do anything to them for a fortnight, and not

to think about them, and at the end of that time they will have disappeared. The wart-curer is supposed to notch a stick with the number of the warts, and to treat some herbs, which he has often to walk miles to procure.'

The evidence in favour of the wart-curer is, Mr. Ingleby maintains, overwhelming, and he cites the following three cases which were personally known to him:

'(1) Of a relation whose hands were covered with warts, some of old standing, and who was induced to give my wart-curer a trial. She gave their number as fifteen, and in the fortnight fifteen had disappeared, but three were left. The wart-curer remarked that she must have stated the wrong number. She admitted this, and in the next fortnight the remaining warts disappeared. (2) A servant in a neighbouring house had thirteen warts on her hands, which disappeared under the same strange treatment. (3) A woman in this village had her face and neck much disfigured by warts, of which altogether on her person there were stated to be some 250. The whole of them disappeared in the fortnight.'

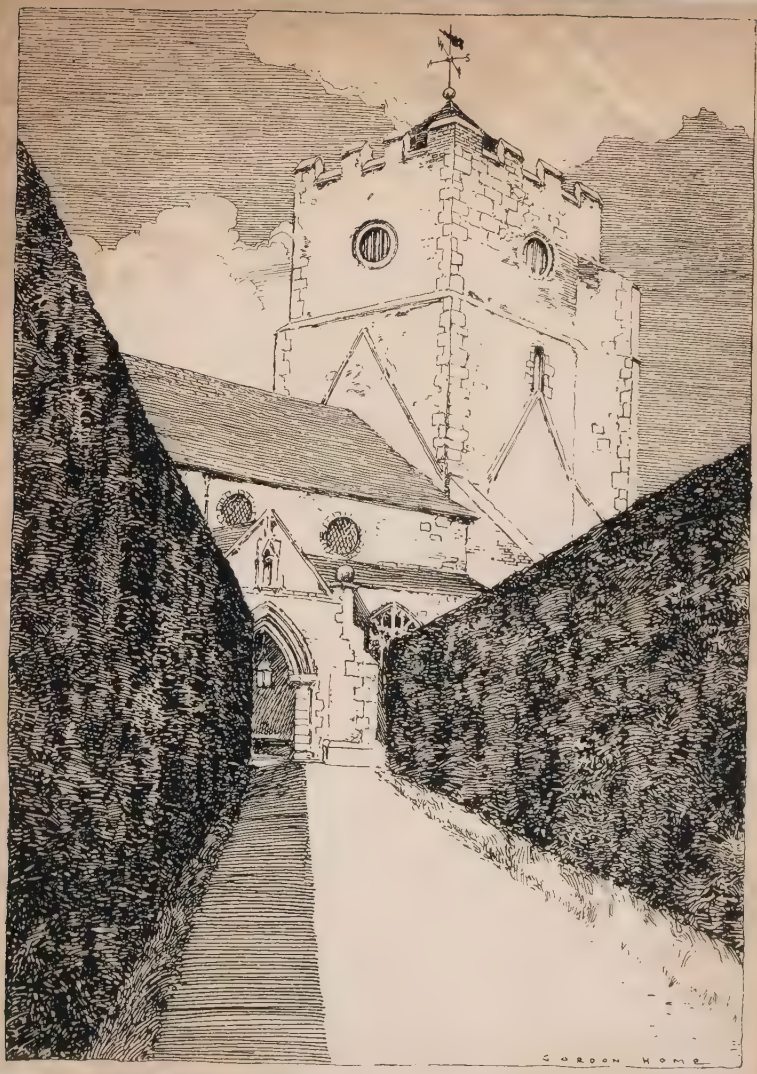
Mr. Ingleby adds that this wart-curer claimed to have cured hundreds of cases. He would receive no money for his services, but did not object to a gift of tobacco.

Heacham Church is a structure in the Decorated and Perpendicular styles standing in the outskirts of the village, just beyond the bounds of the park. Formerly it was a cruciform building, and must have been a fine one; but it has been robbed of its transepts, and the roof of the nave has been considerably lowered. A good piece of old screenwork remains, dividing the nave and chancel; the windows retain some old stained glass, and there is an old plain font. The church contains several memorials to the Rolfes, including a brass to a John Rolfe who died in 1594, and a modern one to the Rev. S. E. Neville Rolfe, who, we are told, 'being dead, yet preacheth.' At the west end there is a good old brass to a knight, and in the north aisle the tomb of Robert Redmayne, who died in 1625. Two of the more recent memorials are to Norman Macleod Ferrers, D.D., Master of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, who died in 1903; and Sapper F. A. Jelly, one of the church's

choristers, who became a soldier, and died in South Africa during the Boer War. But perhaps the most interesting memorial is a tablet over the south entrance to nine inhabitants of Heacham who went out on a boating excursion one Sunday in June, 1799, and were drowned. The tablet bears an inscription that this is a warning to 'the rising and future generations against rashly engaging in similar undertakings, lest they be brought to the same untimely end. According to a framed copy of the *London Chronicle* for June 21, 1799, which hangs near the door, twelve persons in all were drowned. They were going to pay a visit to Captain Pringle, of the *Nile*, whose ship was lying in the roadstead.

Heacham, without being a dangerous rival to any village along this part of the Norfolk coast, is a pleasant little place for visitors without inclination towards the somewhat boisterous pleasuring which prevails at many of the more popular watering-places. It has a flat beach, where there is safe bathing; also a primitive little harbour, where some small 'longshore boats and coasting craft occasionally provide a

HEACHAM CHURCH AND YEW WALK


GORDON HOME

few subjects for artists. Near the station quite a new village has recently come into existence to meet the demands of summer visitors. Travellers to Sandringham, however, are not likely to linger long here, and, after seeing the church, should turn to the left against the Wheatsheaf Inn and hasten on to Snettisham. After noticing a rather curious old red brick bridge spanning a little stream to the left of the road, and after taking the right-hand branch of the road, where it forks just out of the village, there will be nothing to delay them before the next village is approached. So, to while away the time, we may here make brief reference to the family of Le Strange, to whom much of the land in this neighbourhood belongs. It is a family which has produced some notable men, and although it is more intimately connected with Old Hunstanton, where its present representative occupies the fine old Hall which was built by Sir Roger Le Strange in the fifteenth century, its associations with Heacham, Snettisham, and two or three other parishes in this neighbourhood are so marked a feature of the manorial histories that some reference to it here is justifiable.

If an elaborate pedigree in Blomefield's 'History of Norfolk' is reliable, the Le Stranges have held lands in North-West Norfolk ever since the Norman Conquest. However that may be, they have certainly been at Hunstanton for several centuries. In the management of the affairs of their native county they have always taken an active interest, and occasionally one of them has played a prominent part on a wider stage. Of one who was a Fellow and twice Reader and Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn, we learn something from his will, which is dated 1516, and by which he bequeathed 'all his books of law, except the boarded books, to the son of his daughter Barbara, if she have the fortune to have one'; but 'his boarded books to the library of Lincoln's Inn, every one of them to have a scripture of his gift, and to the Chapter of that house a vestment and altar-cloth, price ten marks.'

A more famous representative of the family was Roger Le Strange, who was born at Hunstanton in 1616. His father, Sir Hamon Le Strange, is described as having been a Royalist, who after 'strict soliloquy' reconciled his opinion to the sense of Parliament: but Roger was an

irreconcilable, and in 1644, about twelve months after the Royalist Borough of Lynn had fallen into the hands of the Parliament, he seems to have organized a little conspiracy to regain the town for the King. Having represented to the King that there were still in the town persons whose hearts were warm towards the Royalist cause, he was granted a commission which provided that, in the event of the conspiracy proving successful, he should be appointed Governor of the town, and furnished with a military force strong enough to hold it. Assured of the King's support, he went to Appleton Hall, where he was the guest of one of the Pastons, and there made plans which he hoped would result in the accomplishment of the purpose he had in view. He was met there by certain men from Lynn, to whom he unsuspectingly divulged these plans. Having gained all the information they required, these supposed confederates—who were really Parliamentary spies—arrested him and took him to London, where he was tried by martial law and condemned to death. Subsequently this sentence was commuted to one of imprisonment; but after lying some time in

Newgate Roger contrived to escape to the Continent, where he remained until after the Restoration. He then returned to England, started a newspaper called *The Public Intelligencer*, and soon gained considerable fame as a political phamphleteer. Probably there are few people now who have read his writings, which are described by Shaw as being 'savage diatribes against the opponents of the Court . . . curious as exhibiting a peculiar force of slang and vulgar vivacity, which were then regarded as smart writing'; but his support of the Royalists gained him an appointment as Licenser of the Press, and in his eighty-eighth year a knighthood.

While glancing at the story of Sir Roger le Strange, we have come in sight of Ken Hill, a densely-wooded promontory projecting from the right of the road into the coast-bordering marshes. The towers of a fine modern house called Ken Hill, the seat of Sir Edward Green, are seen rising above the trees. On the opposite side of the road is one of the quarries from which carstone—a material of which, as the traveller cannot have helped noticing, most of the houses, farm buildings, and walls of this part of the

HEACHAM BRIDGE

GORDON
HOME

county are constructed—is obtained. Carstone is the name given to a fine ferruginous conglomerate which is said by geologists to represent the Lower Greensand of the Cretaceous Period. It consists of a fine sand such as is used for glass-making, bound together with oxide of iron so as to be as serviceable as ordinary bricks for building purposes.

Snettisham (locally called 'Snetcham') is a rather large and very prettily situated village about five and a half miles from Hunstanton. It is reputed to have been formerly a somewhat flourishing town, and still has the appearance of a prosperous place. Some well-wooded high ground on the south forms a pleasant background to the village, and on the seaward lowlands across which the Lynn and Hunstanton Railway runs there is a picturesque water-mill very charmingly situated. Some of the houses bordering the main street have an ancient look about them, but this may be largely due to their being chiefly built of carstone, a substance which rapidly assumes an appearance of age. The Hall, for many years the seat of the Styleman family, is an old house in the centre of the

village ; but the interest of Snettisham is almost entirely in its grand old church. which stands on the high ground above the village. where its lofty spire is a conspicuous landmark for all navigators of the Wash. This church is especially noteworthy on account of its west front being an imitation on a reduced scale of that of Peterborough Cathedral. Above the main entrance is a splendid Decorated window. with elaborate tracery. The effect of the interior. with its lofty piers and arches, is also very fine. and the windows of the clerestory are interesting. The rood-screen has been destroyed. but some of the panels were preserved. and have been repainted and utilized for the pulpit. At the east end of the north aisle an altar-tomb with effigy should be noticed : it is that of Sir Wymonde Carye. who, according to the inscription. traced his descent from John of Gaunt. Most of the mural tablets are to members of the Styleman family, but there is one to Thomas Daniell. Attorney-General of Dominica, who died in 1806.

Scarcely is Snettisham left behind and a short stretch of low-lying road traversed, where the

TOMB OF SIR WYMOND CARYE OF
SNETTISHAM, KNIGHT, IN
SNETTISHAM CHURCH

GORDON HOME

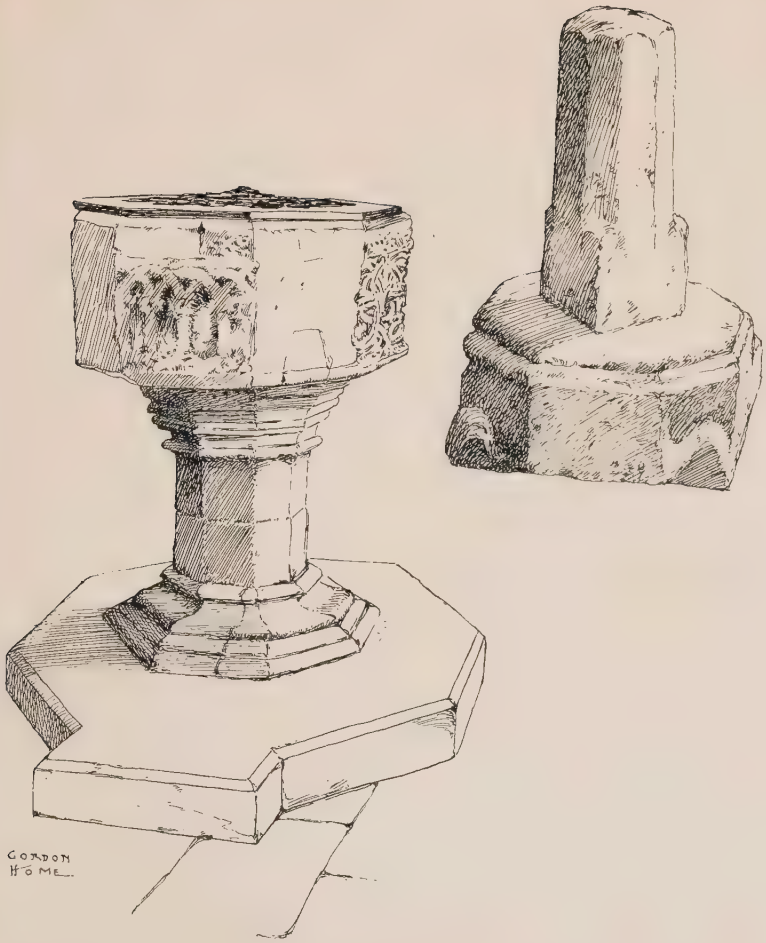
blue blossoms of the lesser periwinkle brighten the banks in early spring, than the parish and small village of Ingoldisthorpe is entered—a straggling little village at the foot of a hill crowned by the church and the home of the Davys, a pleasantly situated house called Mount Amelia. The parish, which takes its name from a tiny stream, the Ingol, which flows westward towards the Wash, is recorded to have been the home of a doughty warrior named Sir Thomas de Walkfare, who distinguished himself in the Battle of Poictiers; and we are told that in the thirty-first year of King Edward III. this Sir Thomas was granted by his royal master a safe conduct for his prisoner, Sir Tristram de Mugalies, with his esquires or shield-bearers, Broinard, Gerrard de Brois, and Megerdos, and his three valets, to go on horseback or on foot to France to procure his ransom.

Some fragments, too, of a grim story which has been associated with Ingoldisthorpe Hall—a modernized house, originally moated, standing to the left of the churchyard—have come down to us, and are thus related by an early topographer:

'In the ninth year of King John it appears that one of the family that bore the name of this village being implicated in the murder of one Drugo Chamberlain, said to have been committed by Herbert de Pastele, the latter was sued by John Chamberlain, the brother of the deceased, when, by the King's license, the crime and the punishment were compromised in the following way: Herbert was to travel to Jerusalem, there to serve God for the soul of Drugo who was slain, during the space of seven years, including the time of his going and returning (if he returned to England before that time he was to be punished as a convict); and Thomas de Ingoldisthorpe, supposed to have been accessory, was to find a monk of Norwich or Binham, or a canon of Thetford, Cokesford, or Walsingham, to pray for the soul of Drugo, and to pay Drugo's parents the sum of twenty marks.'

As Ingoldisthorpe Church is approached, the remains of an ancient wayside cross are seen in the churchyard, immediately in front of the south porch. The church (of St. Michael) is in the Decorated and Perpendicular styles, and its chief feature is a fine, well-carved but

THE FONT AND THE BASE OF THE CROSS,
INGOLDISTHORPE


GORDON
HOME

mutilated font. There are several stained-glass windows, one of which, on the north side of the chancel, is an interesting one to the memory of Captain J. Davy, whose portrait is seen in the upper part. The screen is a good one, but not very old, and the benches in the nave and chancel are copies of some which were removed when the church was restored about fifty years ago. Under the tower is a fine brass, dated 1608, to Agnes Bigge, and at the east end of the south aisle are a piscina and bracket marking the site of an old chapel. The corbels of the nave roof represent the patriarchs and prophets.

From Ingoldisthorpe Church the traveller can return to the highway by a road running southward from the neighbourhood of the church, and a ramble of about a mile will bring him to Dersingham, a rather large village, of which a considerable portion belongs to the King. On entering this picturesque village cross-roads are seen, the right-hand road leading to the railway-station, which is distant about half a mile, while that to the left is a part of the main street, which runs up to the church, and then returns to the Lynn road again, describing the greater

part of a circle. Some low and rather marshy meadowland is surrounded by this road, around which most of the houses in the village are built. But the high ground which rises on the south of most of the coast villages of North-West Norfolk is present here, and, being for the most part well wooded, makes Dersingham by no means the least attractive place the traveller passes through between Hunstanton and Lynn. The village is the residence of several of the employés on the Sandringham estate, and that it has a good share of royal patronage is indicated by the Royal Arms and the Prince of Wales's Feathers being exhibited over the fronts of some of the shops. By keeping to the right after reaching the church, two good inns are arrived at—the Coach and Horses, and the Feathers. Here comfortable accommodation is provided for such visitors as choose to spend a few days in the neighbourhood. A little way beyond the latter of these inns there is a new Foresters' Hall, the site of which was given by the King, and the foundation-stone laid by the Prince of Wales.

The Church of St. Nicholas is about a mile

from the railway-station. Unlike those of Snettisham and Ingoldisthorpe, it stands on rather low ground, though there are hills almost as high as its tower in its immediate neighbourhood. It is a large and fine fifteenth-century building, occupying the site of a Norman church, of which traces were discovered when restoration was undertaken about sixteen years ago. The tower is fine and massive, and has a good five-light west window, and a projecting staircase on the north side. Internally the church has several interesting features. On entering by the south porch the visitor's attention is at once attracted by the font, with its fine tabernacle cover, while at the east end of the south aisle a fine piscina and a squint should be noticed. There are two plain aumbries, one in the chancel, and the other in the north aisle. The screen was originally fifteenth-century work ; but, like the font-cover, it has been restored, though some interesting painted panels, with defaced figures of saints, still form the lower part of it. Some fragments of parclose screens have been utilized in the pulpit and the choir-stalls, and a few of the old poppyhead bench-ends have been worked on to

the new benches. At the east end of the south aisle is the tomb of John Pell, a Mayor of Lynn, who died in 1607. On the slab of black marble which covers the tomb there are two incised figures, and on the sides are kneeling figures of the Mayor's six sons and three daughters. There is a lengthy inscription in Latin, in cutting which the mason seems temporarily to have forgotten that Pell was a Dersingham man, for the 'de Darsingham' is inserted above the first line, and a caret placed underneath, to show where the words should come in. At the west end of the north aisle is a fine old carved chest.

Dersingham Hall is an ancient house which no modern 'improvements' have robbed of a pleasing appearance of antiquity. It stands near the centre of the village, and is passed on the right between the station and the church. It is now the residence of Mr. T. Jannoch, a magician of flower-culture, who is famous for his specializing of lilies of the valley and lilacs. In the grounds of the Hall lilies of the valley and lilacs are grown by the acre, and in an extensive range of glass-houses some magnificent displays of these two flowers—of the latter of which there

IN DERSINGHAM VILLAGE

are over a hundred varieties here—are to be seen. Among horticulturists Mr. Jannoch is well known as the first exhibitor of retarded lilies. Until these retarded flowers were shown, it was believed that the only way of having lilies in bloom out of season was to force them. As Mr. Jannoch has stated: 'Twenty-five years ago, when I mentioned to an eminent horticulturist that what we accomplished by heat would one day be done by cold, I was laughed at.' By means of a huge refrigerator, however, he has succeeded in retarding lilies, so that there is not a month in the year when they are not to be seen in bloom in his nurseries, and he has also been similarly successful in his treatment of many other flowers. The King has shown a great interest in Mr. Jannoch's methods, and frequently brings his guests to Dersingham Hall to see what is being done there.

Having reached Dersingham the traveller is upon the King's estate; but as Sandringham is his destination this chapter must not conclude until he has reached the famous Norwich Gates, which distinguish the chief entrance to the Sandringham grounds. To complete his journey he

must turn to the left, after leaving the churchyard, and continue his way along the village street until he has passed the Feathers Hotel. A turn to the left must then be taken. This road, which ascends a hill, is bordered on the right by some neat little houses which the King has had built. At the top of the hill a wide and straight avenue is entered, and in the distance a glimpse of Sandringham House is obtained beyond the Norwich Gates. The avenue has wide grassy borders, backed by plantations of larch, birch, and fir, with an undergrowth of rhododendrons and laurels. Seen in early spring, when the fine old larches are wearing their freshest green, and the silvery birches are looking like gigantic maiden-hair ferns: when the loud laugh of the green woodpecker is ringing through the woods and the thrushes are in full song, no more delightful approach than this grand avenue can be desired to lead one up to the King's Norfolk home.

THE APPROACH TO SANDRINGHAM
FROM DERSINGHAM

The Norwich Gates are seen in the distance.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERNING SANDRINGHAM FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO THE PRESENT DAY

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CONCERNING SANDRINGHAM FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO THE PRESENT DAY

Before attempting to convey to my readers some idea of what lies within the Norwich Gates, it is worth while to glance into the past history of Sandringham, and perhaps make some reference to events which happened in neighbouring places, but which had some direct or indirect connection with the lands now forming the King's Norfolk estate. At the same time, it will be my aim to make this chapter a continuation of that part of the first chapter which treats of the pre-Norman history of North-West Norfolk. And at the outset I must express my indebtedness to Mr. Hugh Bryant, who has supplied me with many valuable notes gathered from Blomefield's 'History of Norfolk,' manu-

scripts in the British Museum and the Public Record Office, and other sources.

To start with Sandringham, we find that in Domesday the name of this place is written 'Sant-dersingham.' In the time of Edward the Confessor it was held by a freeman of Harold, who was afterwards King of England. The reference to the state of the manor in the time of the Confessor and at the Survey is brief, and may be given in its entirety:

'Then (in the Confessor's time), and afterwards, one plough-team, now (the Survey), none; then and afterwards five bordars, now none; then and afterwards three servi, now one. And there were $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres of meadow. Then and afterwards one plough-team amongst the tenants; then and afterwards one salt-work. Always valued at 20s.'

Harold, as everyone knows, was killed at the Battle of Hastings, and the manor was then given to Robert Fitz-Corbun, who was lord at the time of the Survey.

Sandringham remained in the possession of the Fitz-Corbuns, or Curzuns, until some time subsequent to the reign of Henry II., and then

passed into the hands of Simon de Whatefield, and from him to Reginald de Wode and Alice his wife, who were lords in 1265, when Reginald impleaded several persons for carrying away his goods from Sandringham. Shortly after this the Abbot of the marshland abbey of St. Benet-at-Holme had an interest here, and in 1296 Sir Richard de la Rokele had license from King Edward I. to exchange his Manor of Greensvil in Stoke Holy Cross for that of Woodhall in Sandringham; but about the middle of the fourteenth century the manor passed into the possession of the Cobbes, a family to which reference will be made later.

Previous to this certain lands in the Manor of Westhall, which embraced portions of Sandringham, Babingley, and Wolferton, were held by the Master of the Preceptory of Knights Hospitallers at Carbrooke in Norfolk, at the will of the Prior of St. John of Jerusalem. The names of representatives of such famous families as the Pastons, Sheltons, Wingfields, and Howards are also connected with the early history of Sandringham.

At the time of the Conqueror's Survey,

Appleton, Babingley, Dersingham, and West Newton, which are wholly or in part included in the King's estate, seem to have been more flourishing places than Sandringham. Appleton, which partly belonged to Roger Bigot, Earl of Norfolk, boasted no less than 35 hogs; it also had a church. Babingley, which belonged to Peter de Valoins, a nephew of the Conqueror, had 8 cows and 177 sheep, to say nothing of 5 salt-works. Dersingham, which also chiefly belonged to Peter de Valoins, possessed 6 cart-horses and 4 cows; but its sheep had decreased since the Confessor's time from 560 to 146. West Newton, which was held by Archbishop Stigand until the Conqueror gave it to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, his brother-in-law, had 'always 1 carthorse and 7 sheep.'

Of the manorial histories of these villages, and the others which form part of the King's estate, it is impossible to treat fully here; but a few facts may be gleaned from them. In Appleton, in 1385, Joan, Princess of Wales, the mother of Richard II., held certain lands, and in 1403 there was a fee in that place which belonged to King Henry IV. At Babingley, in 1265, there was

trouble when Robert de Tateshall, who held the Manor of Tateshall, impleaded Martin de Southacre for cutting down his woods whilst he (Robert) was a prisoner of Simon de Montfort, and for selling the wood for 20s. Martin, we are told, was convicted and imprisoned for trespass.

In Dersingham, about the middle of the fifteenth century, certain lands were held by a Sir William Oldhall, who forfeited them on being attainted for high treason, when they were granted to Sir William Capell, Lord Mayor of London, an ancestor of the Earl of Essex. West Newton, a berewic which was given to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, when Archbishop Stigand forfeited it by being in arms against the Conqueror, changed hands again very soon after; for Odo the Bishop, like Stigand the Archbishop, rebelled against the King, who granted the manor to William de Albini. In regard to Wolferton, which at the time of the Survey was a berewic belonging to Babingley, we learn that on November 22, 1486, the Bishop granted license to the inhabitants to collect the alms of all good people in the City and Diocese of Norwich for

rebuilding the parish church, 'lately burnt by sudden fire.'

In the foregoing notes mention is made of some of the owners of land which are now included in the Sandringham estate. Other lords of the manors, holders of knights' fees, etc., before the end of the fifteenth century were Thomas, Lord Scales; John de Vere, Earl of Oxford; Christina de Mandevill, Countess of Essex; Sir Thomas Felton, K.G.; and the Priors of Binham, Shouldham, Flitcham, and Westacre.

Into the history of the Sandringham estate, between the middle of the fifteenth century and the time when it came into the King's possession, we have been afforded some interesting glimpses by the late Mrs. Herbert Jones in her 'Sandringham, Past and Present,' a book dealing with the historical and romantic associations of several parishes in North-West Norfolk. Some well-known names are found to be connected with one or another of the manors. For instance, that of Westhall (to which reference has already been made) came, about 1550, into the possession of Thomas, Lord Scales, who is believed to have

MIDDLETON TOWERS

GORDON C. HOME

been the builder or rebuilder of Middleton Towers, a fine old house about four miles south-east of Lynn. This Lord Scales was the writer of several letters which appear in the famous 'Paston' series. They are written from Middleton, and chiefly refer to disputes between his tenants and other neighbours, on whose behalf he solicits the advice of the 'good judge,' John Paston, praying him that he 'wyll fynde a weye accordyng to right for to put hem in rest and pees.' One of these disputes, however, evidently concerned the 'good judge' personally, for Lord Scales writes:

'I grete you hertly wel, and wul ye wite that Wotton is ever creyng and callyng upon me to write un to you for hise londe; wherfore at the reverence of Good, consideryng the symplenesse of hem all, I pray you that ye put hem at a certen, and lete hem all that they aught to have of right, for thaire creyng cause men to think ye do hem grete wrong, which I wote well ye wold be sory to do.'

The writer of these letters was murdered in 1460 in the neighbourhood of the Tower of London, from which he had just escaped after

assisting to hold it against Lord Warwick and Edward, Earl of March.

His Norfolk estate was inherited by his daughter Elizabeth, who married Anthony Woodville, son of Richard, first Earl Rivers, and brother of Queen Elizabeth Woodville, the consort of King Edward IV. Soon after his marriage Anthony Woodville assumed the title of Lord Scales, but in 1469 he became Earl Rivers. During the later conflicts of the Wars of the Roses he was a faithful adherent of King Edward IV., and in 1470, when the King was compelled to retreat before the Earl of Warwick and eventually take ship at Lynn and flee to Holland, Rivers accompanied him into exile. But they returned to England a few months later, and after the Battle of Barnet, where 'every petal of the Red Rose was scattered from its stem,' King Edward found himself seated firmly upon the throne.

Elizabeth (Scales), the wife of Earl Rivers, died childless in 1474, leaving her husband in possession of her Norfolk estates. The Earl at once went on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James at Compostella. He was a man of

LORD RIVERS

From an MS. in Lambeth Library.

literary inclinations, and while on the journey the idea occurred to him of translating into English the French renderings of certain selections from various Greek authors; and in 1476, upon the arrival in England of William Caxton, that famous printer produced, on November 18, 1477, 'The Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophers, a Translation out of Frenshe into Englyssh by the noble and puissant Lord Antone, Erl of Ryvers, Lord of Scales.' This, though not the first book printed by Caxton in England, is said to have been the first dated book that came from his press. He subsequently printed for Earl Rivers a second book, entitled 'The Proverbs of Christine of Pisa.'

After the death of Edward IV. the guardianship of the young King Edward V. was entrusted to his uncle, Earl Rivers, whom Hume describes as being 'the most accomplished nobleman in England,' and 'entitled by his talents, still more by nearness of blood, to direct the education of the young monarch.' But Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was busily engaged in clearing his way to the throne, and, while Rivers was conducting the young King from Ludlow Castle to

London, the Duke had the former arrested at Stony Stratford and imprisoned, first at Sheriff Hutton and afterwards in Pontefract Castle, where he was soon after executed. Thus ended the honourable career of one of the most distinguished lords of the Manor of Westhall in Sandringham.

A will by which Earl Rivers bequeathed his Norfolk estates to his brother, Sir Edward Woodville, appears to have been set aside, for at the time of the accession of King Henry VII. we find the lands which had belonged to Elizabeth Scales inherited by two of her relations, Lady Oxford and Sir William Tyndal. But in 1517 the manor, which included portions of Sandringham, Babingley, and Wolferton, passed into the possession of the Cobbe family, who had previously held lands in Wolferton, West Newton, Appleton, and Anmer. The Cobbes were one of the leading county families; they intermarried with the Walpoles, Bedingfelds, Spelmans, and Astleys. The name of Mary Cobbe of Sandringham, who was a daughter of one of the Bedingfelds of Oxborough, appears as that of a Popish recusant in 1595; her husband was

owner of Sandringham from 1581 to 1607. Her sister Nazareth also was a recusant. She was the wife of Edward Yelverton, who lived for a time at Appleton, had, according to Le Neve, a 'smale house' at Wolferton, and is buried in Sandringham Church. The above-mentioned Mary Cobbe was the wife of Sir William Cobbe, whose cousin, Henry Spelman, was the father of Sir Henry Spelman, the distinguished antiquary.

To another of the Cobbes of Sandringham—Colonel William Cobbe, who was born in 1613, and who married a daughter of Sir Henry Bedingfield, of Oxborough—Mrs. Herbert Jones devotes a chapter in her book. Blomefield, the Norfolk historian, says of him: 'This William was a great Royalist, and a Colonel in the army or militia, and suffered greatly on that account'; while Playfair* remarks that he was 'particularly distinguished by his exertions during the Civil Wars, and a severe sufferer for his loyalty.' His estates were under sequestration for several years, as is shown by two letters now preserved in the Public Record Office. A letter dated

* 'British Family Antiquity,' by William Playfair (1809).

November 7, 1650, 'Sheweth, that the petitioner's estate is sequestrated, albeit not any delinquency hath bin or can be proved against him, neither is he convicted of Recusancy, notwithstanding the commissioners for the sayd county (Norfolk) have sequestrated him as a Recusant. He humbly praieth a discharge of the sayd sequestration on being a Recusant, tho' unconvicted, and that the commissioners would allow him a third of his estate with his mansion house.' A petition from the Lord Ambassador of the King of Spain on behalf of Colonel Cobbe was presented about this time, and on November 3, 1652, the sequestration was discharged, and the Colonel's rights restored to him.

Colonel Cobbe's sequestration took place in 1643, and Mrs. Herbert Jones suggests that it may have been an outcome of assistance rendered to the Royalists during the siege of Lynn. For in that year Lynn declared itself Royalist, and was besieged by the Earl of Manchester with 4,000 horse and foot. Upon the Earl's arrival the town was summoned to yield; but its authorities, we are told, replied 'obstinately and in an hostile way,' subsequently sending

the Earl a message with the signatures of twenty-five persons attached, 'so that he should not forget to plunder them when he had taken the town.' Royalist aid was promised the garrison by the Earl of Newcastle; but all that arrived was one ship laden with men and provisions. So, finding that preparations were being made for a bombardment, the town capitulated.

Geoffry Cobbe, who inherited Sandringham in 1665 at the death of his father, Colonel Cobbe, sold the lordship about three years later to James Hoste, the grandson of a Dutch refugee named Jacques Hoste, who fled from Middleburg to England to escape persecution at the hands of the Duke of Alva. Upon becoming a naturalized Englishman this Jacques Hoste, Mrs. Jones tells us, received 'the addition of wings to his coat of arms, and a pair of wings for a crest, in allusion to his flight from Holland.' James Hoste was succeeded at Sandringham by a son of the same name, who first married a daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, of Houghton, and afterwards an Ann Burleigh. By his second wife he had several children. His eldest son, also named James, inherited Sandringham, while

from his second son, Theodore, descended Sir William Hoste, who served under Nelson, commanded a brig at the Battle of the Nile, defeated a French and Venetian squadron in the Gulf of Venice in March, 1811, and died in 1828 at the age of forty-eight. The third James Hoste married Susan Hamond, of South Wootton, and their one surviving child, Susan, became the wife of Cornish Henley, of Leigh House, in Somersetshire. She and her husband spent their lives at Sandringham, which at her death in 1795 was inherited by her son Henry Hoste Henley.

While Mr. Hoste Henley lived at Sandringham the manor-house underwent considerable alteration. Much of it was taken down, while various additions made it almost a new building. According to Mrs. Jones, it was 'a long low house, with wings and rather small windows, the staircase, forgotten in the alterations, awkwardly penetrating the roof of the hall. One of the rooms was lined with a large collection of shells, and occupied by a company of stuffed bears, lions, and tigers; in another were some genre pictures and curious volumes, among them French illuminated books. When Sandringham

was sold, on the death of Mr. Hoste Henley in 1834, an auction took place, which dispersed, with the exception of the family pictures, these miscellaneous collections and the rest of the household furniture among the neighbouring halls and rectories.'

In view of the fact that Sandringham now belongs to one of the keenest of sportsmen, it is interesting to remember that it was Mr. Cornish Henley, of Sandringham, Mr. William Mason, of Necton, and Mr. George Townshend (afterwards the fourth Viscount Townshend), who in 1755 established fox-hunting as a regular institution in Norfolk. About that time an agreement was entered into between Mr. Henley and Mr. Mason for keeping up a joint pack of hounds, it being agreed that the pack should be a month at Sandringham and a month at Necton alternately, and that at the beginning and end of the season the hounds should be taken into Cambridgeshire, in September for cub-hunting and in April 'to lay the pack up in blood.'

The connection of the descendants of one family of refugees with Sandringham having ended, the descendants of another family, whom

excited a warm sympathy her weaknesses could not chill—Sandringham became the centre of a great deal of curious interest.

Lady Harriette, who was born in 1812, was the only legitimate daughter of the first Earl of Blessington. When she was only two years old her mother died, and her stepmother, the celebrated Lady Blessington, had little or no regard for her. After living for some time in London, Lord and Lady Blessington went to Italy, accompanied by that 'many-gifted and misguided genius' Count Alfred D'Orsay, but leaving Lady Harriette and Lord Blessington's son and heir in the care of an aunt in Dublin. While they were away from England their son died, and an arrangement was then made that Lady Harriette should marry Count D'Orsay and inherit a part of her father's estate. The marriage took place in 1827, Lady Harriette being then only fifteen years and four months old. She and her husband continued to live in her father's house in Rome, her marriage being only one in name. As Mrs. Herbert Jones writes:

'The child appeared to be a mere pretext for the Count's continued presence in the family;

she became reserved, soured, and unhappy, and is remembered shortly afterwards as sitting at one end of the drawing-room in Lord Blessington's house in Rome, dressed in a pinafore, and consigned to the companionship of her governess.'

Subsequent to the death of Lord Blessington in Paris, she accompanied her husband and step-mother to London ; but she soon left them, and returned to Paris. There she occupied herself in writing novels and *feuilletons* in French.

'She had become,' writes the historian of Sandringham, 'a very beautiful woman, with a sensitive, poetical, and passionate nature and unselfish heart, and with a mind highly cultivated by study and by contact with the cream of a society at once socially and intellectually aristocratic. But from a lack of power of thought and imagination she seemed incapable of grasping wide views ; the stamp of ability and force were absent ; yet there was an air of reflection and expression of composure about the fine chiselled features, and an influence which made itself felt in the tones of her especially rich and penetrating voice.'

Among her friends and intimate acquaintances

the circumstances under which her marriage had taken place were well known. This, together with the fact that her husband had practically ignored her existence as a wife from the day of their unholy union, caused almost everyone to speak tenderly of her when, neglected by the man who should have sought to remedy in some way the wrong he had done her, she granted to another—the Duke of Orleans—that to which Count D'Orsay had only a legal right. One who saw much of her afterwards, when she came to live at Sandringham, writes:

'To those who heard from her own lips the sad story of her life and the terrible cruelty of her early wrongs, it was impossible not to feel the injustice which she never seemed to feel for herself that the author of her misery should have been courted and idolized to the last, leaving her to repent in sackcloth and ashes.'

The Duke of Orleans died a violent death in 1842, and shortly after the death of Count D'Orsay the Countess became the wife of the Hon. C. Spencer Cowper. Their only child, a little daughter, died at Dieppe, where she had been taken as soon as she showed signs of illness.

'The furniture of the room in the hotel at Dieppe where she died was transferred to Sandringham, where,' writes Mrs. Jones, 'every article that had surrounded her, and the bed in which the little form had lain, were placed in a room held sacred as a *chapelle ardente*, within whose walls the mother, day after day, spent some solitary hours.'

But her life at Sandringham was not wholly spent in lamenting the past. While she never sought to escape any humiliation to which she was subjected by those who could find in the wrong which had been done her no sufficient excuse for her wrong-doing, she did her best to make atonement, and devoted the greater part of her time to deeds of charity. An old farm-house near Sandringham was transformed into an orphanage, and in a part of the house which served as the village school she taught the children for an hour every morning. At her expense the church was restored, and although it has since undergone a more complete restoration, and been greatly beautified at the cost of the royal owner of Sandringham, it is almost impossible for anyone who has any acquaintance

with the story of the erstwhile lady of the manor to read unmoved the inscription :

'In the year 1855 this church was restored by Lady Harriette Cowper, daughter and co-heiress of the Earl of Blessington, and wife of the Hon. C. Spencer Cowper, to commemorate their only child, Marie Harriette Cowper.'

It was from the Hon. C. Spencer Cowper that in 1861 the King (then Prince of Wales) purchased the Sandringham estate, which then consisted of the parishes of Sandringham, West Newton, Appleton, Babingley, and portions of Wolferton and Dersingham. Soon after the purchase Lady Harriette Cowper wrote: 'The large sum of money obtained, and the high station of the purchaser, were great inducements, as we have every reason to hope that the circumstances of the tenantry will be much improved; but I shall regret the orphan home, the church, the schools, and the kind, good, grateful people.'

CHAPTER V

GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF SANDRINGHAM HOUSE AND GROUNDS

far longer than the royal residence, to which it is a delightful approach; but there is no record that I am aware of as to whom it was planted by.

Of the old Hall to which the avenue led up at the time when the estate came into the King's possession, there are now no traces. Before it had long been occupied by its royal owner, it was found to be inadequate and unsuited to the accommodation of the household, and though there was for a time some idea of utilizing it permanently, and with that view a range of servants' offices was erected, the inconvenience of the house soon led to the idea being abandoned; so, reconstruction being impracticable, the house was eventually pulled down and the greater part of the present house built by Mr. Goggs, of Swaffham and Dersingham, from designs by Mr. Humbert, a London architect. It was enlarged in 1883, when, in accordance with the designs of Mr. R. W. Edis, of London, several rooms, including the ball-room and the tea-room, were added at right angles to the south end.

On November 1, 1891, an outbreak of fire did considerable damage to the house, and during restoration certain additions and alterations were

made under the direction of Mr. Edis. On the south side two stories have been built over the bowling-alley and billiard-room, and in a turret over the ball-room a clock with three faces has been erected by the local tradesmen as a memorial to the late Duke of Clarence and Avondale.

The style of the house may be described as modified Elizabethan, and whether approached from the east or west its appearance is dignified and pleasing. It does not face the lime avenue, which runs north and south, for its main entrance is on the east side. Here there is a large porch with Romanesque arches, surmounted by a pierced stone parapet, and having over the eastern arch the Royal Arms. Over the door is an inscription in old English letters relating that 'this house was built by Albert Edward and Alexandra his wife, in the year of our Lord 1870.' The west front, however, is the principal one, and has an extreme frontage of some 500 feet. More than half this frontage is that of the main building, many of the chief rooms of which overlook the terrace and a grassy slope leading down to lovely parterres with stone

CHAPTER V

GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF SANDRINGHAM HOUSE AND GROUNDS

In an earlier chapter the reader who started with me from Hunstanton was brought as far as the Norwich Gates of the Sandringham grounds.

These gates, by which access is obtained to the main avenue leading up to Sandringham House, are famous for their splendid ironwork. Their design is entirely floral, and it is of exquisite detail and general effect. It consists of arums, oak leaves, acorns, vine leaves and tendrils, and flowers and leaves of the greater convolvulus, wreathed and twined with the natural grace and beauty one admires in the tangle of the wild wood. On the bases of the iron pillars on either hand there are heraldic

designs, and each of the four pillars is surmounted by a bronze griffin supporting a coloured shield of arms, representing the titles held by the King when he was Prince of Wales. Above the gates are the Royal Arms, set amid beautifully-worked sprays of holly and clusters of roses, and surmounted by a crown. A curved railing on each side connects the gates with the park wall; these railings also are of delicately-wrought ironwork, the upper part being a harmonious blending of the rose, the shamrock, and the thistle. Both gates and railings are the work of Messrs. Barnard and Co., of Norwich. The former attracted great attention at the London International Exhibition of 1862, and were presented to the King by the county of Norfolk.

The avenue upon which the gates open consists of a double row of fine and lofty limes—grand-looking trees even in winter, when the fretwork of their interlacing branches is seen against a clear, cold sky, but seen at their best, perhaps, when autumn has set its mark upon them, and their leaves will soon begin to fall. Needless to say, this avenue has been in existence

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE, EAST FRONT

GORDON C. HOME

baskets of flowers, and having in the centre a graceful bronze statue of a seated goddess surrounded by variegated hollies and rhododendrons.

It is upon this terrace that the visitor soon arrives after entering the grounds by the east gate and making his way round the north end of the house. It extends the full length of the main building, and is continued northward by a broad walk bordered by various species of well-grown coniferous trees, all of which have been planted by one or another distinguished visitor to Sandringham. On a label at the foot of each is inscribed the name of the planter and the date on which it was planted. Among the names to be read here or elsewhere in the grounds where this pleasing custom has been carried out are those of nearly all the principal royalties of Europe.

The walk terminates northward at a perfect reproduction in miniature of an Oriental pagoda, the work of some of the estate carpenters. Under this pagoda sits a huge Chinese joss, who, with an unfathomable smile on his bland face, gazes before him with the expression of one who has attained to a complete Nirvana. He has been

robbed of the costly jewels with which he was once adorned, and there are indications that at some time or another he has had to submit to rough treatment; but here, with the sunlight brightening the broad path before him, and with the sibilant whispering of the leaves and the murmuring of the pines around him, he is evidently at perfect peace, and it is useless to try and read the riddle of his inscrutable smile. All we know of him is that the late Admiral the Hon. Sir Henry Keppel found him in China and brought him here as a present for the King.

At the opposite end of the terrace, on the south wall of the main building, a sun-dial marks the sunny hours, which are all too few when spent in these lovely grounds. 'My time is in Thy hand' are the words to be read above the dial, while underneath are the familiar lines:

> 'Let others tell of storms and showers,
> I'll only count your sunny hours.'

In a quiet corner almost under the sun-dial are buried three of the Queen's favourite dogs, her 'faithful little companions Facie and Punchie, two Japanese spaniels,' and 'dear old Rover,'

Her Majesty's constant companion for fifteen years.

One is sorely tempted to linger long on the terrace, or in an adjoining sunk garden around an old Italian well-head, so delightful is it to inhale the fragrance of the flowers, and let the eye rove across the lawns to the shrubberies with their wealth of rhododendrons; but the grounds have other delights, and they are waiting to be revealed. There is, for instance, to the south-west of the house, one of the most beautiful little wild-wood spots that the imagination can conceive, and in connection with it a sylvan dell with a brook, waterfall, and whirlpool such as one sometimes pictures to one's self as an ideal spot in which to idle through the hours of a perfect summer day. Here there are charming nooks where, in a shade as of a cloister, the ferns dip the tips of their fronds in the clear water; woodland and waterside flowers mingle their brilliant blossoms; water-fowl steal silently in and out of little aquatic jungles of reed and rush; blackbird, thrush, wren, and warbler pipe and trill melodiously, and over all the arching boughs of trees spread a tremulous screen of

whispering leaves, through which the sunlight can only come in shimmering flakes of gold. In a retreat like this it is easy to believe in the existence of those

'Elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves,'

and a natural thing to people the undergrowth and thickets of roses with those prankish little subjects of Titania, whose dancing-floor is the mushroom's cap, whose music the strident strains of the cricket, and whose scenes of nightly frolic are illumined by the glow-worm's light.

If there be a spot in the grounds which rivals this dell in loveliness it is the Rosary—a scene of enchantment upon which the visitor comes suddenly while he is wandering up and down the many pleasant paths in the southern part of the grounds. It is a place to which no description can do justice, though Hafiz—the Prince of Persian poets, as Emerson calls him—might have sung of it in a song rich with the fragrance of a Sultan's garden and the opulence of Oriental imagery. Here the national flower of England reigns supreme, flaunting its glorious hues on dome-roofed bower and ornamental

trellis, opening a thousand buds in the full blaze of the June sun, and bending a thousand more to the ground to drink the dew from the grass. Open-air rose-culture has never been brought to greater perfection in this country than it is in this lovely garden hidden away among the deep-breathing dusky firs, and it is only fitting that the pedestal of the fountain which plays among the roses should be surmounted by a figure of the patron saint of England.

> 'By breath of beds of roses drawn,
> I found the grove in the morning pure,'

sings Hafiz; and if, like the phœnix of which he also sings, he could awaken to life from his ashes and find his way into the Sandringham Rosary, he might well say that he had found his paradise of fulfilled desire. Nor would he lack the nightingale's song on still summer evenings to add soul-searching music to the fragrance of the roses and the witchery of the twilight. A rustic pavilion stands on somewhat elevated ground beside the rose garden, and cannot but be a favourite spot with the guests at Sandringham. At the back of this summer-house there

is a stone bath which was brought from Greece by the late Duke of Coburg, and given by him to the King.

Not far from the Rosary, on some rather low ground where the bamboo has been introduced and is flourishing remarkably, there is a maze which has proved the delight and vexation of many visitors to Sandringham. Tales are told of excursionists who ventured into the labyrinthine paths between its box and yew hedges within half an hour of the time when they should have started for the railway-station to return home, and who wandered there in despair of ever finding their way out, and at last were compelled to call pitifully for the aid of one of the gardeners.

One of the most charming views to be enjoyed in the grounds is to be had from the north side of the lake, looking towards York Cottage, the home of the Prince of Wales. The lake has been made with such skill that it has more the appearance of a natural brook or stream than an artificial sheet of water, and several fine old trees, including a magnificent oak, standing close to the waterside, increase the charm and naturalness of the scene. Spanning the lake is a picturesque

YORK COTTAGE, SANDRINGHAM

rustic bridge resting on stone boulders, and beneath this bridge, on a spring day, waterfowl may be seen swimming with broods of little cheeping balls of down struggling along in their wake, ready to vanish in a moment into the reeds and rushes at a note of warning from their anxious parents.

In the early morning hours, before the gardeners are abroad, even herons may occasionally be seen by the side of the lake, where, with neck outstretched, they stand like sentinels, alert to seize any unwary fish that ventures within reach of the lightning-like stroke of their dagger-like bills. There are swans always here to add their stately beauty to the silvery chasteness of white water-lily and the golden gleam of sunlit water, and in the mirror of the lake are reflected the brilliant blossoms of a thousand flowers.

The grounds are encompassed by a carstone wall, which divides them from the park, and within that wall the visitor might well be content to spend the whole of a summer day. Nathaniel Hawthorne has said that the Garden of Eden could not be more beautiful than the private garden at Blenheim, and much of his description

of the Blenheim garden may fitly be applied to the grounds at Sandringham; for here as there the scene, 'by the artful circumlocution of the paths, and the undulations, and the skilfully interposed clumps of trees, is made to appear limitless.'

Here the 'sylvan delights of a whole country are compressed into this space, as whole fields of Persian roses go to the concoction of an ounce of precious attar. The world within that garden fence is not the same weary and dusty world with which we outside mortals are conversant; it is a finer, lovelier, more harmonious Nature, and the Great Mother lends herself kindly to the gardener's will, knowing that he will make evident the half-obliterated traits of her pristine and ideal beauty, and allow her to take all the credit and praise to herself. I doubt whether there is ever any winter within that precinct—any clouds, except the fleecy ones of summer. The sunshine that I saw there rests upon my recollection of it as if it were eternal. The lawns and glades are like the memory of places where one has wandered when first in love.'

The King's stables are on the east side of the

grounds, and are approached by a drive bordered by trees and shrubberies, which hide them from the house. Needless to say, they are spacious and excellent as regards their fittings and arrangements. Adjoining them is the residence of the head-coachman, and attached to them are the quarters of some of the grooms and attendants.

In going through the stables one must place one's self under the guidance of a groom or attendant, otherwise half the interest attaching to the horses will be missed through ignorance of names and associations. For while it can be seen at a glance that among the horses and ponies there are some of the finest animals that are to be seen in harness, no one can help taking notice of the fact that there are also some animals here which are past work, and which could only be found enjoying a peaceful old age in the possession of an owner who is a true lover of horses, and believes that faithful service should be rewarded not only in man but in beast. But, as everyone knows well, the King and Queen are true lovers of all dumb domestic creatures, so no one will be surprised to learn that no horse or

pony that has served them well is ever disposed of when its working days are over, nor is ever slaughtered except when it is a mercy to do so to relieve it of pain.

Changes, however, are bound to take place in the royal stables as in any other, and in all probability some will have occurred between the time when this is written and that when it comes under the reader's eye; but as most of the facts stated will apply just as well then as now, it may be of interest if I mention a few of the horses I saw in the stables in the spring of 1904. Of course, there were many others—such as the big road horses for the teams which work the landaus and brakes, and the saddle horses used by the servants in the carrying out of their duties—but to refer to them all here is impossible.

In the first place, no one could help admiring the splendid pair of ponies, Lady Love and Ruby Mine, at present used by the Queen, nor help noticing with interest Her Majesty's old favourite pony, Beau. Then there were Faithful Boy and Margate Buoy, a fine pair of chestnuts, with splendid action, which the Queen drives in a park phaeton. In what is called the Queen's

fourteen-stall stable I noticed also York Rose and Tudor Rose, a splendid pair of iron-grays from Windsor, and three old grays, Cromer, Bright, and Brisk, which belonged to the Queen when she was Princess of Wales, and which she still thinks a great deal of. Among the King's favourites was Tooting, a big, fine bay horse, which he drives in a Suffield cart or a buggy.

The pensioners naturally claimed much of my attention, and I can remember seeing among them Mite, an old favourite pony, then in a loose-box, and just able to hobble about; Marky, another pet, getting on for thirty years old, and blind in one eye; Louvima, a sturdy little animal, which at one time was shared by the Princesses Louise, Victoria, and Maud, a fact accounting for its name, the riddle of which the reader will easily solve; and Vivandiere, the late Duke of Clarence's polo pony. Then there was Violet, the Queen's own riding pony, which goes with her everywhere, and has taken the place of Viva, who now lies buried just outside the stables in a quiet spot marked by a stone inscribed 'Viva. Died July, 1899. Aged 28 years.' And last, but not least—for it is generally

master of any situation in which it finds itself—there was a small Italian donkey, a frisky pet, which is sometimes driven in a tiny little carriage by the juvenile Princes and Princesses when they visit Sandringham. There should have been a pair of Italian donkeys, but the missing one, sad to relate, died while on its way to England, its death being the result of a surfeit of tar-cord.

In the coach-house, perhaps the most striking vehicles are the late Emperor Napoleon's fine charabanc, a Japanese rickshaw, two Norwegian carioles from Hamar, a Hungarian victoria from Buda Pesth, the Queen's French pony-carriage, a French pony-trap, a Scotch carriage convertible into a victoria or a phaeton, the Queen's Raleigh car in which she drives tandem, and a dainty little varnished carriage which was built for a deceased midget pony Nawab, after it was brought from India and exhibited at Islington in 1876. Some of these vehicles are, of course, preserved as curiosities rather than for use; but others are familiar to dwellers in the neighbourhood of Sandringham, as are also the King's buggy, the Queen's landau, and Princess

DRINKING FOUNTAIN

Under a roof of heather on the Sandringham Estate.

GORDON
HOME

Victoria's pony-trap. The harness-room, which is on the right of the entrance to the stable-yard, contains much to interest visitors, including the splendid sets of harness used during the Indian tour made by the King when he was Prince of Wales, sets of French and Hungarian harness, Norwegian cariole harness, and a smart little set made for the midget pony just referred to. On the opposite side of the yard entrance is the saddle-room, where are preserved the late Fred Archer's racing saddle, the embroidered quarter-sheet worn by Ambush II., the winner of the Liverpool Grand National; a shoe worn by Ormonde when he won the treble event—the Derby, St. Leger, and Two Thousand; an interesting trophy consisting of an arrangement of some of the hair of various notable horses owned by the King between 1867 and 1887, presented by Mr. John Porter on the twenty-fifth anniversary of His Majesty's wedding-day; and a Mexican saddle with lasso attached, presented by Colonel Cody (Buffalo Bill). The walls of this room are hung with pictures and photographs of some of the King's horses.

Perhaps the most natural thing to do after

seeing the King's stables is to pay a visit to the King's kennels, which comprise an admirably planned and built range of buildings on the south side of the grounds, adjoining the road to West Newton. Here, under the watchful eye of Mr. Jackson, the head-keeper, who has C. Brunsdon for kennelman, there are to be seen some fifty or more dogs, including several famous prize-winners. To pick out favourites among them is almost impossible, for the King and Queen are fond of all their dogs, and take great pleasure in showing them to their guests. But there are several animals among them which are bound to claim the attention and interest of every visitor who cares at all for dogs, and this remark applies especially, perhaps, to the rare and valuable rough-haired Bassets—dogs of the dachshund type, and of which the Sandringham kennels possess examples not to be beaten anywhere.

Among the handsomest dogs in the kennels are the splendid deer-hounds and Borzois, or Russian wolf-hounds, the latter including Sandringham Moscow, a big fine dog, and Vassilka, a beautiful animal which a few days before I first

saw it had carried off the prize for the best dog at the Norwich Kennel Club Show, and which won first, second, and third prizes at Manchester in 1903, when eleven months old. But people who have favourite breeds will consider other dogs as handsome, some giving the palm to the collies, others to the dachshunds, and yet others to the Clumber spaniels, and of the last-named to a very promising bitch, Sandringham Lucy, which is likely to prove one of the best of her kind in England.

Individual dogs to which especial interest attaches are numerous, and I remember that Brunsdon pointed out to me Lady Lee, a chow which had been a pet of the late Queen Victoria; Bouncer, a retriever given to the Prince of Wales when he was on board the *Ophir;* Swift, a Danish fox-terrier, which is a great favourite of the Queen; Gip, Princess Victoria's poodle; Luska, a Siberian sledge dog; and Jacko, a Samoyeid which accompanied the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition into the Arctic, and was afterwards presented to the King. But what with Great Danes and Bassets, black pugs and bull-dogs, schipperkes and spaniels, Pomeranians

and terriers, and dachshunds and deer-hounds, to attempt to remember half the fine animals in the kennels is like trying to call to mind half the dogs one has seen at a show. I can only add that no one who can obtain permission to visit the King's kennels ought to neglect the chance of doing so.

The head-keeper's house is in the immediate neighbourhood of the kennels, and near it are the houses in which the King's and the Prince of Wales' homing pigeons are kept; here, too, is the Queen's dove-house. Among the pigeons, most of which are of famous Belgian breeds, are some birds which have won first prizes in long-distance races, including a stout-built chequer, which in the national race from Lerwick in the Shetlands completed a distance of 511 miles in about ten hours, a speed of 1,400 yards a minute.

Almost as delightful as the grounds and gardens immediately surrounding the house are the large kitchen-gardens, which are separated from the grounds by the road from Dersingham to West Newton, at a point where a road to Anmer branches off on the left. The entrance to these gardens is through fine wrought-iron

gates, immediately within which is a large lawn, to the left of which is a picturesque house occupied by the head-gardener.

A broad walk, over 300 yards in length, runs through the centre of the gardens, which are about 16 acres in extent. This walk is bordered by flower-beds and trellises with cordon apple and pear trees. Parallel with the centre walk are two other walks, that on the left being known as the Bothy Walk.

The plant houses, which consist of a corridor 200 feet long, with six span-roofed houses 100 feet long at right angles to it, contain flowers of exquisite loveliness. One house is especially devoted to carnations; there are also houses reserved for figs, melons, cucumbers, tomatoes, peaches and nectarines, plums, muscats, and mixed grapes. In the porch adjoining one of the muscat houses is a collection of Japanese dwarfed trees. Adjoining the Bothy Walk, which owes its name to the admirably fitted up bothies here in which the gardeners live, there are fruit-storing houses, a seed store, a mushroom house, and other buildings in which work is done in connection with the gardens.

Adjoining the kitchen-gardens, about half a mile down the Anmer road, is the Queen's Dairy, a pretty little building, which, although unusually attractive outwardly and exceptionally decorated within, is far from being simply an exhibition adjunct of the neighbouring Model Farm, for dairy-work is carried on here under the most perfect conditions for the accommodation of the royal household. It consists of a dairy, a butter-room, and a bright little can-room, the first-named being walled with ornamental tiles. Here is preserved the head of Jewess the Fourth, a famous short-horned heifer which won the champion prize at the cattle-show of 1874, also a Japanese poultry-cage presented to the Queen by Prince Komatsu, and a stuffed Japanese cock and hen, the former an extraordinary bird with a tail no less than 11 feet long.

On the left of the dairy is the Queen's tea-room, a daintily furnished and decorated room with a recessed window looking out into a charming little garden laid out in the Dutch style, and containing several curiously clipped yews, two sun-dials, and a well-grown *Picea*

pinsapo, planted by the Czarevitch on November 9, 1874.

That the King is an ardent sportsman, and that Sandringham is famous for both its racing stud and its abundant game, are facts with which every Englishman is familiar; but anyone who has the advantage of seeing the stud and chatting with Mr. Jackson, the head-keeper, either in his office near the kennels or while being shown round the pheasantries, gains a better idea of Sandringham as the home of a sportsman than a hundred pages of written description could convey. From 10,000 to 12,000 pheasants are reared on the estate annually, and the first shoot, which takes place on the King's birthday, is one of the chief events of the year. On that day about sixty beaters are employed, all of whom are uniformly dressed, and each carries a flag. There are about 13,000 acres of shooting belonging to or rented by the King; the Prince of Wales rents about 10,000 acres. What the bags have been like is no secret. The best season was that of 1896-1897, when, according to a card which hangs in the head-keeper's office, there were obtained 13,958 pheasants, 3,965 part-

ridges, 836 hares, 6,185 rabbits, 77 woodcock, 8 snipe, 52 teal, 271 wild duck, 18 pigeons, and 27 various birds.

The Stud Farm is not far from the Queen's Dairy. Here, except when they are on the stud farm at Wolferton, are to be seen those two famous Derby winners, Persimmon and Diamond Jubilee. In what is called Persimmon's Yard a spacious padded box, lighted by electricity, is occupied by that notable racehorse, whose record, inscribed on a plate on the box, is as follows:

PERSIMMON (1893).

Sire—St. Simon. Dam—Perdita II.

Bred by the Prince of Wales, K.G.

Won in 1895.	The Coventry Stakes, Ascot . .	£1,724
„ „	Richmond Stakes, Goodwood .	827
Won in 1896.	Derby Stakes (2 min. 42 sec.—record time)	5,450
„ „	St. Leger	5,050
„ „	Jockey Club Stakes . . .	8,990
Won in 1897.	Ascot Gold Cup . . .	3,380
„ „	Eclipse Stakes	9,285
		£34,706

Trained by R. Marsh; Stud Groom, E. Walker; Ridden by J. Watts.

Near this box is that of Diamond Jubilee, which is inscribed :

DIAMOND JUBILEE (1897).

Sire—St. Simon. Dam—Perdita II.

Bred by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, K.G.

Won in 1899.	Boscawen Stakes . . .	£1,200
Won in 1900.	Two Thousand Guineas Stakes .	4,700
„ „	Newmarket Stakes . . .	3,425
„ „	Derby Stakes (Time—2 min. 42 sec.)	5,450
„ „	Eclipse Stakes	9,285
Won in 1900.	St. Leger	5,125
		£29,185

Trained by R. Marsh ; Stud Groom, E. Walker ; Ridden by H. Jones.

Perdita II., the dam of these two grand horses, was bought by Mr. John Porter while the stud was under his superintendence. Her grave is in the paddock, near the house of the stud-groom.

In connection with Persimmon an amusing story is told. A visitor to the Sandringham neighbourhood had a great desire to look upon the wonderful horse, and one day he took his

stand at a point where he expected to see him brought out for exercise. For a long time he waited, and at last, his patience being almost exhausted, he asked a passer-by where Persimmon was to be seen. The man interrogated was a bit of a wag. His reply was: 'Persimmon! Why, they are using him just round the corner to help to mend the road.' The visitor could scarcely believe his ears; but he hastened round the corner, thinking that even a sight of the Derby winner drawing a cartload of road-metal was better than not seeing him at all. A few minutes later he stood before a steam-roller, on which the name 'Persimmon' was inscribed in brightly burnished brass letters!

CHAPTER VI

DESCRIBES SANDRINGHAM PARK AND WEST NEWTON

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During the spring of 1904 there were many days when to be obliged to stay indoors was a trial hard to be borne. By royal proclamation it should have been ordained that three weeks of April and a week of May should be a general holiday. For the weather was the ideal weather for the season, and 'to be in England when April was here' was not merely a poetic conception of the acme of delight, but was to feel to the full the joy of living. For once Spring seemed bent upon doing the utmost she was capable of towards attaining to the ideal; with a queenly munificence she distributed her favours with both hands, and even when her eyes were dimmed for a while it was only by tears of joy,

which glistened in the light of her sunny smiles. In the meadows the wild flowers sprang up early to welcome her; in the woodlands the rugged elm and fairy birch were ready, at the touch of her magic wand, to forego a few days of their winter sleep; and even the birds that were far away in the sunny South were unable to resist her early summons, for they came to greet her before their wonted time. She was the Spring that Chaucer knew, and which in the dawn of English poetry gave to his songs all the sweet and fragrant freshness of an April daybreak. While roaming the countryside one was reminded everywhere that it was the time

> 'When Zephyrus eek with his swete breth
> Enspired hath in every holt and heth
> The tender croppes, and the yonge sonne
> Hath in the ram his halfe cors yronne,
> And smale foules maken melodie.'

Indeed, it was a time when the man was to be pitied who could look upon the rural world and not feel that it was good to be alive. On every side there was beauty and gladness. The country was Arcadia; over meadow and field, heath and

river, was shed a golden glory of warm, life-giving and life-renewing sunlight ; and

> 'The woods were filled so full of song,
> There seemed no room for sense of wrong.'

It was in the midst of this glorious time that I sat one day on the moss-grown root of an ancient forest oak, which spread its gnarled branches over springing grass near the lake in Sandringham Park. A breeze as soft and warm as that which is laden with the fragrance of June roses came gently from the south ; larks and meadow-pipits were soaring and singing in a sky that was only flecked here and there with a feathery wisp of cloud ; and a pleasant murmur as of a mountain brook came from where the overflow of the lake fell in miniature cascades over the carstone rockwork of a tiny stream. Up the massive trunk of the grand old oak a little tree-creeper was climbing, seeking insects there as tree-creepers had done hundreds of years ago ; once a brimstone butterfly, looking like a wind-blown autumn leaf, fluttered by in wavering flight ; and from time to time the ringing laugh of the green woodpecker was heard from the

bordering woodlands. In everything the magic influence of springtide was making itself felt. The birds were singing their sweetest; the woods were decking themselves for May Day; even the oak under which I sat was showing signs that soon, notwithstanding its hoary antiquity, it would be bursting into leaf again. The yearly miracle—more wonderful than any told of in monkish legend—was once more being wrought—the miracle of spring's full awakening, to the wonder and beauty of which so many eyes are blind, in the meaning of which is all knowledge and truth.

Perhaps it was the grand old oak, or maybe it was the cooing of the wood doves and their wing-clatter among the distant trees; but whatever it was, it brought before me a vision of Sandringham Park as it was many years ago. The rugged oak was even then standing, as were several others whose enormous girth proves their antiquity; but they stood in a deer park or chase which extended from Castle Rising to Sandringham. It was a royal deer park, and had for its ranger John de Vere, Earl of Oxford; but, after a while, it passed into the hands of Thomas

CHURCH AVENUE, SANDRINGHAM

Howard, the powerful Duke of Norfolk, in exchange for certain of his lands in Suffolk. Much of the chase was ancient forest, where the trees were nearly all oaks, as they are in that old forest, Staverton Park, in Suffolk, and in that forest the wild red deer roamed among a dense undergrowth of fern; but bordering the woodlands there were wide and tawny heathlands, where droves of great bustards lived, and the wild whistle of the stone-curlew sounded weirdly in the silence of the summer night. Through the forest and over the heathland I saw the red deer hunted by King and noble. As it was in the days of 'Chevy Chase'—

'The drivers through the wood went
For to raise the deer;
Bowmen bickert upon the bent
With their broad arrows clear.

'Then the wild through the wood went
On every side shear;
Greyhounds through the groves glent
For to kill their deer.'

Cry of huntsman, baying of hound, and ringing blast of horn echoed through the forest, startling the hind from the fern, the fox to its earth, and

the hare from its form; the woodman abandoned his work to watch the hunting, and the swineherd left his charges untended at their acorn feast.

> 'All the long summer day rode the King pleasantly,
> With all his princes and nobles,'

and at last, when the shadows were lengthening across the glades, I saw the gallant stag at bay. And having the 'recipe of fern seed,' which enabled me to walk invisibly, I was able to accompany the hunting party on its way back to the grim old Norman castle at Rising, and listen to the jesting over the day's misadventures and the plans that were made for the hunting on the morrow.

It was all a day-dream that came to me under the storm-rent oak, but it seemed very real to me, and when my thoughts returned from their wandering, I could hardly believe that I had been dreaming. For when my eyes had abandoned introspection, and I raised them towards a grassy knoll near the woods bordering the Wolferton road, I saw a sight which almost convinced me that Rising Chase was still as it once

had been. On the crest of the knoll stood a red deer stag, which, notwithstanding the mildness of the season, had not yet shed its antlers. It looked to me like a royal hart; but seeing it against a background of firs and larches, I could not tell whether it had developed the three anterior tines. It had just emerged from the wood, and while I watched it standing in an attitude in which Landseer has often depicted the 'monarch of the glen,' it was joined by other stags which had been feeding in the wood. The picture they made was a beautiful one, and from that moment I had no difficulty in realizing that here in the olden days was the 'wild forest' where,

> 'With reins avaled and swifty breathed horse,
> With cry of hounds, and merry blasts between,'

the huntsmen chased the 'fearful hart of force.'

In all there are something like two hundred deer—red and fallow—in Sandringham Park, and, needless to say, they add greatly to the charm of the park at all seasons of the year. The park extends south-westward from the grounds for a considerable distance towards Babingley, being

bounded on the south by West Newton and on the north by the road to Wolferton and Babingley. Since the estate has been in the King's possession a considerable portion of it has been covered with plantations, but in the neighbourhood of the grounds it has for the most part been left in its original state, and it is here that some grand old oaks, fine old elms, and rugged firs are to be seen. A charming little lake, has been hollowed out of some low ground in the midst of this part of the park, and in the centre of the lake is an island on which the swans and other water-birds nest. What chiefly impresses one is the natural charm of the park, and this, it is evident, its royal owner is determined to preserve. Herons are allowed to fish for hours together by the lakeside; rabbits make their burrows almost wherever they please; and I imagine that the native wild creatures whose presence here would be unwelcome might be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Just within the park on the north side, and adjoining the Wolferton road, is the parish church, which is approached from the house

by a pleasant avenue of various species of conifers. From the traveller along the road the church is partly concealed by trees and shrubberies, but within this sylvan setting there is a God's acre, which from spring to autumn is a flower-garden and 'haunt of ancient peace.' The church is small, and originally can have had little or nothing to distinguish it from a hundred village churches in the county, but careful restoration, tasteful adornment, and unique associations now combine to make it one of exceptional interest. Its structural characteristics are chiefly those of the Perpendicular period, and it consists of nave, chancel, transepts, south porch, and a western tower, the transepts having been added by the King, who, with the Queen, the late Queen Victoria, and other members of the Royal Family, has done everything possible to make it all an ecclesiologist could desire it to be. As one enters by the south porch a brass inscription is noticed, to the effect that the church clock was given by the King as a memorial to his friend Christopher Sykes, who died in 1898; while just inside the door is the inscription, referred to in an earlier

chapter, recording the restoration of the church in 1855 by Lady Harriette Cowper. The nave windows are filled with beautiful stained glass, two of them, like the tower window, being of Munich glass, with the subjects outlined on an amber ground. The chancel windows, which are in the Early English style, are also fine; one in the north wall was inserted by the King in 1878 in memory of the Rev. W. L. Onslow, rector of the parish. The subject of this window is 'Christ stilling the Waters.' A brass inscription on the south wall is as follows:

'In memory of William Lake Onslow, M.A., Rector of Sandringham, Chaplain to their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh, chaplain and naval instructor R.N., who departed this life August 30, 1877, aged 57 years. This tablet is placed by his friends afloat and ashore to record their high esteem and affection for one who, whilst faithfully discharging his various duties, endeared himself to all by his kind and gentle disposition.'

Another painted window, in the south wall, is to the memory of Colonel Grey, one of the equerries to the King when he was Prince of

OAKS IN THE PARK, SANDRINGHAM

Wales; while a third is a memorial to the infant Prince Alexander, who died on April 11, 1871.

The entrance used by the members of the Royal Family is on the south side of the chancel, just beside the carved oak seat which is occupied by the King and Queen. Facing this seat is a like one, which is usually occupied by the guests at Sandringham. Above these seats and elsewhere on the walls of the chancel are some beautifully carved marble medallions to the memory of Princess Alice of Hesse, who died on December 14, 1878; the Duke of Albany, who died on March 27, 1884; the Emperor Frederick III. of Germany, who died on June 15, 1888; the Duke of Clarence and Avondale, who died at Sandringham on January 14, 1892; the Duke of Coburg, the Empress Frederick of Germany, and Queen Victoria. A cross in the centre of the chancel floor marks the spot where the body of the Duke of Clarence rested before it was conveyed from Sandringham. Recollections of a time of national suspense and apprehension are wakened by reading the inscription on the brass lectern:

'To the Glory of God. A Thank Offering for His Mercy. Dec. 4. 1871. ALEXANDRA. "When I was in trouble I called upon the Lord, and He heard me."'

There are many other things to be noted in this beautiful little church, but to mention them all would necessitate a chapter about the church alone. Attention must, however, be directed to the reredos, which is adorned with some very fine glass mosaic, in gold and colours; to the fine organ and the pulpit; and to the font which is modern, but has a good Perpendicular tabernacle cover. The colours suspended in the nave are those of the Norfolk Regiment, the 9th Foot.

In the churchyard, at the east end of the church, is the grave of the infant Prince Alexander, and on the north side of the church there are several black marble slabs to seventeenth-century residents at Sandringham Hall. There, too, are several memorials to old servants who faithfully served the royal owner of Sandringham.

Closely adjoining the churchyard and the Wolferton road there are a few houses, charm-

ingly situated, which cannot fail to attract attention. Nearest to the church is the pretty little rectory house, the residence of the Rev. Canon Hervey, honorary chaplain to the King. It was formerly occupied by the late Rev. W. Lake Onslow, whose nautical interests led him to observe the exact latitude and longitude of the house and have them inscribed over the door. The rectories of West Newton and Babingley and the vicarage of Appleton are annexed to the Sandringham Rectory.

Just beyond the rectory house is the Alexandra Technical School, founded, as its name implies, by the Queen. Here, under the direction of an excellent instructress, and not infrequently in the presence of the Queen—who takes the greatest interest in this admirable institution—exceedingly good work has been done by several of the employés on the King's estate and other inhabitants of the parishes included in it. Examples of this work have been seen at the Home Arts and Industrial Exhibitions, where several awards have been gained. A good specimen of the wood-carving done in the school is now in the Queen's Dairy. It was by the

scholars here that the cushions and slippers were made which were provided for the convalescent on board the hospital ship fitted out by Her Majesty (when Princess of Wales) during the South African War.

One other house standing in this charming neighbourhood must be noticed: it is that of General Sir Dighton Probyn, V.C., who for many years filled the responsible position of Comptroller of the King's Household, and is now Keeper of the Privy Purse. This house was erected by Sir William Knollys in 1864. It stands in very pleasant grounds between the park and the Wolferton road.

From the east side of the churchyard a footpath crosses the park to West Newton, the King's model village. As one rambles along this path pleasant glimpses are obtained of the grounds and York Cottage, also of Sandringham Cottage, the residence of Mr. F. Beck, the agent of the estate.

I have described West Newton as a model village. Many writers have done the same, so I will add that there is none which can be compared with it in the county. As one enters it

from the Sandringham side one sees on the left the Alexandra Cottages, a row of substantially built and excellently fitted-up semi-detached dwellings which were erected for the better accommodation of the labourers and other employés on the estate; nearly opposite is the village school, which owes so much to the royal lord of the manor; and on turning to the right towards the church one sees on the left a picturesque modern half-timbered house, at the rear of which is the village club-house.

The West Newton Village Club was founded and its spacious club-house built by the King (when Prince of Wales) for the benefit of the villagers and the men and youths employed on the estate, and one need only glance into the club-house in the evening, after work is done in the gardens, stables and coverts, and on the farms, to realize how much the club and the many benefits and conveniences it affords are appreciated. There one finds seated around a blazing fire or at the tables, smoking their pipes, drinking their glasses of ale, playing cards, chess, draughts, or dominoes, or reading one or another of a selection of newspapers, illustrated weeklies,

and magazines worthy of a town reading-room, the men who in other villages would probably be spending their evening in a public-house. Social gatherings and entertainments are frequently held at the club-house, and the club is managed without any of those unnecessary and irritating restrictions which have led to the collapse of more than one similar institution. As an instance of the King's tact in this direction, the writer of an article on 'The King as a Country Gentleman'* relates that when the club was founded a rule was made that 'one pint of beer per day only can be obtained by any person.' This rule, says the writer, 'the King disliked, and, indeed, it belongs to a most unworkable class of regulations, since it can be so easily evaded. . . . The King abolished the restriction, but substituted one for it allowing each man to be his own judge of what was good for him, but guarding against intemperance by making a first offence punishable by suspension for a month, a second by suspension for six months, and a third by expulsion. Time has shown that the King was right. In eighteen

* *Country Life*, June 7, 1902.

WEST NEWTON VILLAGE CLUB

GORDON C. HOME

years there has been only one case of a member being suspended for a month; he did not repeat the offence. The affairs of the club are managed entirely by the men themselves, and the institution has proved very beneficial.'

West Newton Church, which stands on rather high ground overlooking a pleasant valley, where some of the King's fine cattle can usually be seen grazing, resembles that of Sandringham in that it owes its admirable restoration and beautiful and tasteful adornments — possibly even its preservation from ruin and disuse—to the King. It is recorded to have been formerly in a 'melancholy and almost hopeless state of dilapidation.' It is a building in the Perpendicular style, and consists of chancel, nave, north and south aisles, south porch, and a western tower. In the course of the restoration, which was carried out under the direction of Sir A. W. Blomfield, the north aisle was rebuilt on its old foundations, new roofs replaced some low and flimsy structures which had taken the place of the original ones, the whole church was refloored, and while the stonework was carefully restored, the old work was preserved wherever possible. To the refitting

of the interior several members of the Royal Family have contributed, as have other royal personages. The late Queen Victoria was the donor of the organ; the reredos was the gift of the late Duke of Albany; the jewelled altar-cross was given by the late German Emperor, Frederick III., and the late Empress Frederick; the altar-covers were presented by the late Duke of Cambridge; and the chancel stalls by the late Duke of Coburg. The west window was filled with painted glass at the cost of Prince and Princess Christian, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, and the Duke and Duchess of Argyll. Other windows were the gifts of the King and the late Grand Duke of Hesse. The stained east window was presented by the late Christopher Sykes, M.P.; the pulpit by members of the King's household; the alms-dish by Lord Colvile of Culross; the lectern by Sir A. W. Blomfield; and the Bible and Prayer-Book by the late Bishop of Norwich.

West Newton Church is usually attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales and Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark when they are in residence at York Cottage and Appleton

House. In the outside of the west side of the tower there is a very fine niche, which probably at one time contained a Pietà.

As one rambles about West Newton one notices many charming cottages, each with its well-cultivated garden, and the appearance of them is enough to indicate that they owe their existence to the King. And it would seem that between the occupants of these cottages there is a friendly rivalry as to which of them, by assiduous attention to his garden and the decking of it with fragrant and bright-hued flowers, should succeed in making it the most attractive to the eye of the royal landlord. One feels confident that this is a village in which the ideal rural life is as nearly attained as it is possible on this earth, and one cannot wonder at hearing on every side homely but fervent expressions of affection for the King and Queen.

CHAPTER VII

HOUGHTON AND THE WALPOLES

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No one who spends a few days in the neighbourhood of Sandringham is likely to leave it without having seen Houghton Hall—that large and splendid house which Sir Robert Walpole, the great Prime Minister, built on the estate which for several centuries had been in the possession of his forefathers. For Houghton, though not a very old house—two centuries not yet having elapsed since it was built—has fascinating associations, and the names connected with it are not likely soon to be forgotten. There was a time when a magnificence almost regal was maintained at Houghton, to be followed by days when its glory was not only eclipsed but succeeded by vandalism and buffoonery. These, however, are matters to be dealt with when we reach Houghton.

For the present I will content myself with pointing out how a stranger may reach Houghton, and giving some description of the road. There is, of course, a rail journey; but it is a rather long one round by Lynn. I shall assume, therefore, that the reader has his headquarters at Dersingham, and intends to make the journey by road.

Taking the Norwich Gates—with which he is by now familiar—as a starting-point, he should make his way towards the Kitchen-Gardens, and turn down the road running almost due eastward beside them. Having already seen the Queen's Dairy and the Model Farm, he will be acquainted with the features of the first half-mile or so of this road, and there will only be need for him to notice the lofty water-tower some distance away on the right before he comes to the commencement of an avenue, planted to celebrate and perpetuate the memory of the King's Coronation. The trees, of course, are young as yet, but there is no doubt that in time this approach to His Majesty's home will be as delightfully picturesque as are those from Wolferton and Dersingham. Among the trees in

the new avenue is a special row of purple beeches, planted, as can be seen from the inscribed labels beneath them, by the King, the Queen, Princess Louise, Princess Victoria, Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark, and the Duke of Fife, on November 10, 1902. At this time the Emperor of Germany was a guest at Sandringham.

The following is a contemporary account of the planting of the trees:

'On Monday afternoon an interesting ceremony took place. Various members of the Royal Family, including the Kaiser, planted a number of purple beeches at a spot to be known as the Coronation Oval, in the centre of the new avenue at the junction of the Anmer and Sandringham estates. In future the avenue will be known as the King and Queen's Avenue. Here the King's tenants were assembled before a clump of young copper beeches, temporarily put in position. These beeches, together with two miles of sycamores already planted, were subscribed for by the tenantry, labourers, and residents of Sandringham, and intended as a "surprise" birthday gift for His Majesty. An address was read by Mr. Betts, an old tenant, to

which the King replied, declaring that he had never felt better in his life, and that he loved Sandringham, and would always love it as his home. Each member of the Royal Family present then planted a tree, the King handling the spade first. The Queen then placed her beech firmly in position, and, turning to the Kaiser, said, "Now it is your turn." Removing his hat, the Emperor grasped the spade like an expert nurseryman, and performed his share of the gardening briskly. The Prince of Wales planted one tree for himself and another for the Princess, while, aided by their father, the two little Princes and the little Princess boldly followed the example of the others.'

After this there is nothing calling for description until about three miles have been traversed since the Norwich Gates were passed, when Anmer Park will be reached. The park borders the road on the right, and the lodge is seen ere the village has scarcely come in sight. The Hall stands a very little way back from the road, but is almost hidden by trees. To the right of it is the church, which stands in the park; and between the house and the park there is a

ANMER CHURCH

magnificent old oak, which must have been there at least as long ago as the latter half of the sixteenth century, when certain events occurred which were intimately connected with Anmer Hall, and of which some account must be given. This remark will have prepared the reader for the statement that the Hall is an ancient house. Some parts of it are as old as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and, although its interior has been modernized, there is one room containing a grand old oak ceiling, while the exterior is not without its marks of antiquity. Compared with that immense house, Houghton, which we shall see presently, Anmer Hall is a small house; but it is one of those comfortable old places such as many notable families have been content to inhabit from generation to generation.

Remote from centres of active and strenuous life, it has yet known stirring times, and within its walls men, and maybe women, too, have prepared themselves to dare and suffer for what they held to be right. Shut off from the world as it seems to be, there were nights when at the tapping of a leaf against a window-pane the hearts of the inmates almost ceased to beat, and

at an unexpected knocking at the door hands went swiftly to the sword-hilt and faces became set and grim. Now, it would seem, it has fallen upon slumbrous times, for when I last saw it only a silently-moving housekeeper stole quietly from room to room: but if the spirits of the dead ever revisit the scenes of their mortal life, the spirit of Father Walpole must haunt the darkened rooms of Anmer Hall.

And this is briefly the story of Father Walpole, the events of whose life and the circumstances of whose death are so faithfully related by Dr. Jessopp in his 'One Generation of a Norfolk House.'

Henry Walpole, who was born in 1558, was the son of Christopher Walpole, who came to live at Anmer in 1578, and was also the owner of a considerable tract of land in Dersingham. Henry was sent to Norwich Grammar School, where he became a scholar just about the time when Edward Coke, the future Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, was leaving it for Trinity College, Cambridge. Norwich was at that time the residence of several zealous divines, and, as Dr. Jessopp says, 'If daily and hourly tirades

against the Pope and Babylon could make a lad a sound Protestant, few schoolboys in England could have been in a more favourable position for arriving at such a frame of mind.' But upon young Walpole these influences were without effect, unless it was to cause him to revolt against the hard discipline to which he was probably subjected.

In January, 1575, he was entered at St. Peter's College, Cambridge, where within a year he was joined by a cousin and four other near neighbours from Norfolk, three of whom were, like himself, to become members of the Society of Jesus. His sympathies were with the Jesuit movement from the time of the arrival of the Mission in England; but the tragic scene of the martyrdom of Edmund Campion at Tyburn seems to have decided him to become a Jesuit. Almost immediately after the death of Campion it became whispered abroad that Walpole was the author of a poem entitled 'An Epitaph of the Life and Death of the Most Famous Clerk and Virtuous Priest, Edmund Campion, a Reverend Father of the Meek Society of the Blessed Name of Jesus,' and an order was issued

for his apprehension. But, according to Bartoli, he slipped away to Norfolk, and concealed himself in Anmer Hall. He was pursued and escaped with difficulty, but eventually succeeded in reaching Newcastle, from whence he sailed to France. He was admitted among the probationers of the Society of Jesus in February, 1584, and ordained priest in Paris in December, 1588.

While Henry Walpole was abroad, John Gerard, an active Jesuit, landed on the Norfolk coast, and was entertained and protected by Edward Yelverton, who lived at Grimstone, a parish about seven miles east of Lynn. All the principal families in this part of Norfolk were Roman Catholics, and upon the members of several of them, including the young men of Christopher Walpole's family at Anmer, Father Gerard quietly exercised considerable influence. Dr. Jessopp writes:

'Round the hearth at Anmer, five miles or so from Father Gerard's retreat, five young men, the eldest of them six-and-twenty years of age, might be seen sitting moodily in that winter of 1589, with no future before them, and no career

open, living under a ban. At any moment some emissary from the Government might knock rudely at the door; some pursuivant might come to call them to account, and press the oath upon them; some spy might report that they no longer put in appearance at the parish church, which was almost contiguous to their hall. Every message from the outer world was full of threatening; there was no field for their ambition, no outlet for their enthusiasm, no scope for the exercise of such powers as they were conscious of possessing. Of course they became fanatics; of course they became more and more possessed by one idea; of course the sense of wrong and injustice mastered their reason and judgment. The rites of a religion that was proscribed seemed to them to be the only things that were worth living for, and became in their eyes all the dearer and more precious because every time that they took part in them they were running a tremendous risk, and braving the terrors of the persecuting laws.'

With Father Gerard's imprisonment in the Tower, and what befell him there, we have nothing to do here; but the foregoing reference to him and his work is admissible because it was

in the hope of being able to take up the work where Father Gerard left it that Henry Walpole set foot again on English soil. He sailed from Dunkirk about November 20, 1593, on board a ship whose captain had promised to set him ashore somewhere on the coast of East Anglia, where he could rely on the protection of personal friends and strong adherents of his faith. But a storm arose, the ship was carried into the neighbourhood of Flamborough Head, and Walpole, with two companions, landed at Bridlington, but not before a spy, who had made the passage in the ship with them, had slipped ashore and carried information of their arrival to York. In a few hours the returned exile was apprehended, and after suffering imprisonment at York for a few weeks, he was conveyed to London, and committed to the Tower. There he was severely tortured on several occasions, in order to compel him to betray his associates.

The torture was beyond his endurance, and his examiners succeeded in extracting from him an account of his life abroad, and various facts concerning the persons to whom he had brought letters.

'It would, however,' writes Dr. Jessopp, 'be an injustice to Henry Walpole to allow my readers to suppose that, even at the very worst, he betrayed any who were not already heavily compromised. A careful reading of this elaborate confession shows plainly enough that he compromises no one *at home* whose life or liberty could have been put in peril by his revelations.'

He appears to have recanted, but this was not enough to save him from further torture.

'A curtain drops,' we are told, 'upon all those terrible scenes, which make us shudder as we faintly endeavour to call them to our minds. We do know that there came a time when he lost the use of his hands altogether; and when he somewhat recovered from the effects of his torturing, his writing had become a tremulous and almost illegible scrawl. For nine long months he lay in the Tower, and no further word or whisper concerning him has survived to our time. The gray old walls have many a sad story to tell of those who languished there, broken down and desperate, but no sadder one than that of this man, who aspired to be a hero and who failed.'

At the Lent Assizes at York in 1595, he was brought up for trial, found guilty of having abjured the realm without a license, received Holy Orders beyond the seas, and returned to England to exercise his priestly functions, he being a Jesuit Father and a priest of the Romish Church. On April 17 he suffered death for his 'crimes.'

Anmer has known many masters since it passed out of the possession of the Walpoles. For several generations it was the seat of the Coldhams, whose tombs we shall see in the church; and for about twelve months it belonged to a celebrity in the person of Mr. Terah Hooley, but it is now owned by the King. Its occupier is Captain F. T. Hamilton, whose wife is the daughter of the late Admiral Keppel, who often spent some time here, and was happy, I doubt not, to be so near his revered and beloved Queen. In the village he is well remembered, for, notwithstanding his having lived far beyond the allotted span of human life, he was hale and active almost to the last, and often seen abroad during his visits to the Hall.

Anmer Church is a small restored Perpendicular building pleasantly situated within a stone's-throw of the Hall. Although possessing few features calling for mention here, it is worth entering, if only to read a somewhat curiously inscribed brass which is let into the floor of the chancel immediately in front of the altar. The inscription is as follows:

> 'Here . vnder . lyeth . Richard . Parry
> who . being . a . Cambro Britan . and
> person . heere . betwene . 56 . and . 57
> years . died . IVLY . 2 . 1624 . in . the . 80
> yeare . of . his . age . or . there . about.'

In the chancel there are some inscriptions to seventeenth and eighteenth-century Dusgates and eighteenth-century rectors; while in a mortuary chapel on the south side of the nave there are two mural tablets, one to a Coldham and the other to a Patrick. The stairs which led to the rood-loft are in good preservation, and there are several hatchments.

After passing through the village, where the King has built a convenient little chapel and provided an excellent water-supply for the inhabitants, the road is bordered for a short

distance by trees, and then skirts Anmer Mink, a tract of gorsey common-land which in April is musical with the chuckling songs of the many linnets which nest in the gorse. A 'tawny piece of antiquity,' where slight traces of Neolithic man may be detected by the student of prehistoric archæology, and where the curious call-note of the whinchat is suggestive of Stone Age flint-chipping, this tract of untamed wilderness yet wears every spring an aspect of youthful freshness, and with the glory of its blaze of gorse blossoms seems typical of life's triumph over age and decay. Like the Egdon Heath of Hardy's fascinating story, 'The Return of the Native,' Anmer Mink is an 'inviolate place,' having 'an ancient permanence which the sea cannot claim'; and this impression of primevalness is also conveyed by an ancient road which the traveller crosses when he reaches the south-eastern corner of the Mink and is about to enter upon the comparatively barren expanse of Harpley Common.

For the road in question is that remarkably preserved green trackway known as Peddar's Way, which runs right across Norfolk, and to which some reference is made in an earlier

ON ANMER MINK, LOOKING EASTWARDS

On the right is one of the barrows.

GORDON C HOME

chapter. Here it is very distinctly marked, as it skirts the Mink on its eastern side, and disappears over a ridge of Harpley Common to the right of the Houghton road ; and looking upon it one cannot help thinking of the many strange scenes that must have been witnessed along it since it was first trodden by human feet. Originating, perhaps, as a prehistoric trackway, it was traversed by the Bronze Age men whose bones are crumbling in the round barrows which are dotted along its course through North-West Norfolk. Then the Romans came, and a force of Dalmatian cavalry is seen riding along it, bound from some southern station to garrison that bleak and isolated fortress, *Branodunum*, of the Saxon Shore. A few centuries later Saxon colonists are using it as a highway over the chalk downs, which they are glad to leave for some less barren country in the south ; and almost at their heels ruddy-faced, fair-haired Norsemen advance from the coast which the withdrawal of the Roman soldiery has left unguarded, and hasten on to lay waste with fire and sword the peace-loving Saxons' homes. A little later the soldiery and servants of Norman barons appear

on the road, making their way to Earl Warrenne's great stronghold at Castleacre and the castle of the D'Albinis at Rising.

Whether foot-weary pilgrims made much use of the road is doubtful, but some of them, when they had landed at Lynn and were on their way to the famous shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, must have crossed the road somewhere in this neighbourhood, and may have rested awhile on the side of one of its bordering barrows. But as the country became settled, and the establishment of many centres of industry brought a network of new roads into existence, the ancient trackway which for so long had been the chief highway of North-West Norfolk fell into disuse except as a drove-road, along the sides of which the shepherds and drovers fed their flocks and herds as they slowly moved them to and fro across the county, and even for that purpose it has not been used for many years. Occasionally a shepherd drives his sheep a little way along it as he takes them towards their fold, and now and again a gipsy finds for his horse free pasture on its grassy margins; but generally you may ramble along it for miles and only meet some

solitary farm-hand whose cottage stands apart from highroad and by-road, or whose work takes him to some lonesome field.

Traces of prehistoric man are to be seen still further along the Houghton road. Just beyond Peddar's Way, and to the right of the road where it skirts Harpley Common, there is one of the largest barrows in this part of the country—a high round barrow, the shape of which has been well preserved since at least the Bronze Age. Whether it has ever been opened I know not, but if the Goidelic or Brythonic chief or warrior whose bones or ashes were interred in the mound could revisit the spot where his eyes last saw the light of day, he would, I imagine, find it has undergone little change since he had his home in some pit-dwelling on the heathland or lake-dwelling on one of the neighbouring meres. The fenced plantation to the left of the road might puzzle him, for he could scarcely know the meaning of trespassing; but, looking south-eastward across the sunburnt surface of Harpley Common, he would find hardly a landmark that was familiar to him obliterated. And who can say that in the old green trackway run-

ning across the chalk ridge he would not recognise a road his feet had often trod?

While our thoughts have travelled backward into a remote past, our feet have brought us to the bounds of Houghton. For after skirting Harpley Common—on which one or two other barrows than that I have mentioned are to be seen—the road bends northward, soon to reach crossways, where the road to the right is taken, and in a few minutes the traveller stands before the south gates of Houghton Park. A glimpse of the famous Hall is to be had from here, and to the right of it—in the park—the parish church; and it is towards the latter that the visitor must make his way if he wishes to have a better view of the Hall, but has not obtained permission to enter it and see what is left there of the magnificence for which it was famous during the lifetime of the great statesman who built it.

It was in 1722—the year in which the Duke of Marlborough died—that Sir Robert Walpole began to build at Houghton the huge house upon which he was to lavish so much wealth. Its designer was Colin Campbell, whose plans

were altered—'improved upon' is the term generally used—by Thomas Ripley, a protégé of the Prime Minister. Some hard things have been said about Ripley as an architect, especially by Pope, who wrote:

> 'Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
> And needs no rod but Ripley with a rule;'

and also—

> 'So Ripley, till his destined space is filled,
> Heaps bricks on bricks, and fancies 'tis to build.'

But we are told on good authority that for many of the finest features of the house we are indebted to the taste of Ripley. It is built of freestone, and consists of a quadrangular main building 166 feet square, having two principal fronts ornamented at each end by a cupola and lantern. In the centre of the west front are four lofty Ionic columns supporting the pediment on which are the Walpole arms. Tuscan colonnades connect the wings with the centre, making the entire frontage one of 450 feet. The house is not seen to advantage from a distance, for it stands low, Sir Robert, against the advice of Ripley, having preferred to build it

as nearly as possible on the site of his father's old house. The south-west angle was finished in 1725, and the south wing in the following year; but it was not until thirteen years had elapsed since the laying of the foundation-stone that the building was completed.

The interior was decorated and furnished in the costliest style. The great marble hall, which is a cube of 40 feet with a stone gallery running almost round it, has a fine ceiling and cornice; but its most remarkable features are the door and doorway leading into the saloon. The door is cut out of a solid piece of mahogany, and has richly gilt columns on each side and fine decoration above. Facing it is a companion doorway, but this is now the frame of a window opening on to the garden front. There is a tradition that these two doorways cost Sir Robert £3,000. They were greatly admired by the late Empress Frederick, who drove over to Houghton during what proved to be her last visit to Sandringham; and they were photographed with a view to their being reproduced at Friedrichshof.

The saloon, which has its walls hung with crimson velvet brocade, is a splendid room with

HOUGHTON HALL

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a ceiling by Kent, the subject being 'Phaeton with the Chariot of the Sun.' The state bedroom has a ceiling by the same painter, whose subject in this instance is 'Aurora and the Nymphs.' The bed in this room cost £2,000. Beyond the state bedroom and the adjoining dressing-room, which contains a good deal of Stuart tapestry, there are several others in which are some fine pictures. The last room opens into the dining-room, where there are some family portraits. These include more than one of the most famous of the Walpoles, and among other pictures are portraits of Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice, by Vandyck; 'The Fortune-teller,' one of Opie's best works; a beautiful portrait of the Duchess of Ancaster, by Sir Joshua Reynolds; and several works of Old Masters.

Although Houghton is not a very old house, nor so attractive in outward appearance as several of the old manor-houses in East Anglia, it has so much about it which brings one in touch with the past, and it stands on a site so rich in romantic associations that it is almost impossible for anyone to visit it without becom-

ing more conscious of the actuality of bygone days. In fancy one sees that twelfth-century son of the Fens, Richard de Walpole, who was the first of the family to come to Houghton, where he married Emma de Houton, a daughter of the lord of the manor.

One by one, too, his descendants appear. Among them is a Bishop of Norwich and Ely, whose ashes now rest in the presbytery of the grand old cathedral of the Fens. Another is the cousin and heir of the unfortunate Amy Robsart, who was born, in all probability, in that old Norfolk house of tragic story, Stanfield Hall, and who died under such mysterious circumstances at Cumnor Hall. Then there is Dorothy Walpole, the 'Brown Lady,' whose wraith is said to haunt the old oak staircase of the Townshends' neighbouring Hall at Raynham, and whose death also gave rise to some strange stories. Galfridus, her brother, a sea-captain who has lost an arm in the service of his country; and another brother, Horatio, who has been Ambassador Extraordinary at the Court of France, attract brief notice as the imagination makes them live again. But it is by yet a third

brother of the 'Brown Lady' that attention is chiefly claimed. He is the great statesman who did so much for his King and country, and whose faults, undeniable as they are, were those of the days he lived in rather than his own. He stands apart from the rest, thinking, perhaps, as he gazes at the stately house he has raised, of the triumphs and troubles he has known since he first laid hand on its foundation-stone. From nearly every other man of his day the words which seem to come from his lips, and which he had inscribed on the stone, would have sounded bombastic: 'That Robert Walpole, whom you, O Posterity, shall hear of, has placed me here.' For him fickle Fortune has done her best and her worst, and though his face is a plain index to the strenuous life he has led, there is still something about it reminding one of what Pope has said of him:

> 'Seen him I have, but in his happier hour
> Of social pleasure, ill-exchanged for power;
> Seen him, uncumbered with the venal tribe,
> Smile without art, and win without a bribe.'

Of yet other figures, strange yet familiar, one gets glimpses; but they are scarcely heeded

while the aged statesman remains in view. Even his son, the 'incomparable Horace,' attracts only a fleeting glance, and from what one sees at a glance it would seem that Houghton has few charms for him. And truly it can in no way be likened to that 'most trumpery piece of gingerbread Gothic,' Strawberry Hill!

It was to Houghton that the great Prime Minister retired in 1742, when the Chippenham election, carried against him by a majority of sixteen, convinced him that resignation was the only course open to him.

After a career during which he had been continually fighting against the bitterest party rancour and many secret difficulties, yet had always proved himself a most able and sagacious Minister, it may be he was glad to turn his back upon the scenes of his triumphs and defeats, and enjoy the rest and comparative quietude of his Norfolk home. But after such a life as his had been, it must have been hard for him to find contentment even here. We are told, and can well believe it, that there were many days when his amusements were limited to superintending the planting of trees in his park and jogging about

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE

From the painting by J. B. Van Loo.

his estate in a ponderous gig, on which his arms with the Order of the Bath were emblazoned. Writing to a friend at this time, he said: 'My flatterers here are all mutes. The oaks, the beeches, the chestnuts seem to contend which best shall please the lord of the manor!' And one can have little doubt as to what he was thinking about when he added: 'They cannot deceive; they will not lie.'

His chief solace during those declining years, when his political power was gone, was the pleasure he found in arranging the magnificent collection of pictures for which Houghton was for a far too brief while famous, and which, owing to the impecuniosity of George, third Earl of Orford, England has lost probably for ever. This collection cost Sir Robert £40,000, and from a descriptive catalogue of it published by his son Horace, we learn that it included some of the finest works of Vandyck, Rubens, Rembrandt, Salvator Rosa, Teniers, Claude Lorraine, Paul Veronese, Titian, Poussin, Carlo Maratti, and Guido. Most of these pictures were sold to the Empress Catherine of Russia for the sum of £40,555. On hearing of the sale,

Horace Walpole wrote to Lady Ossory: 'It is the most signal mortification to my idolatry for my father's memory that it could receive. It is stripping the temple of his glory and his affection. A madman excited by rascals has burnt his Ephesus. I must never cast a thought towards Norfolk more.' In another letter, to Sir Horace Mann, he said: 'Would you believe it —yes, for he (George, Earl of Orford) is a madman—that he is refurnishing Houghton—aye, and with pictures, too, and by Cipriani? That flimsy scene-painter is to replace Guido, Claude Lorraine, Rubens, Vandyke, etc.'

It was early in 1742 when Sir Robert retired from office. On March 18, 1745, he died. At the time when his fatal illness seized him he was superintending the removal of some ground which shut out the view from the east side of the Hall. No monument to his memory has ever been erected in the little church in the park, but the parish register contains the entry: 'A.D. 1745, the Right Hon. Robert, Earl of Orford, died March 18th, and was buried ye 25th, in ye 68th year of his age.' His death caused a reawakening of interest in his affairs, and it was

long before people ceased to agitate their minds as to how it was he had been able to live and entertain at Houghton in so lavish and magnificent a style. His private income, according to Robert Bell, was originally about £2,000 a year; but subsequently, owing to the increased value of landed property, it rose to something more than double that amount. 'But all that time he was living in great extravagance, and used to hold yearly meetings at Houghton, called "the Congress," which generally lasted six or eight weeks, and were attended by nearly all his supporters in both Houses, costing him on the average about £3,000 per annum. His buildings, etc., were estimated at £200,000, and his pictures at £40,000. His wife's property was expended to get rid of encumbrances, and he made a considerable sum by a fortunate speculation in South Sea stock. All his known resources, however, added together, his official income of £3,000, and £2,000 more for a sinecure, even with the emoluments, will not enable us to account satisfactorily for the profuse style of his living and the enormous sums laid out upon Houghton.'

Political squibs are usually of ephemeral interest; but when a famous man like Dr. Johnson lampoons a great statesman like Sir Robert Walpole, the interest attaching to the lampoon is considerable, if not lasting. The Doctor's squib was a rather elaborate affair. It was entitled 'Marmor Norfolciense, or an essay on an ancient prophetical inscription, in Monkish rhyme, lately discovered near Lynn in Norfolk, by Probus Britannicus,' and it commenced as follows:

'In Norfolk, in the town of Lynn, in a field which an ancient Tradition of the County affirms to have been over a deep Lake or Meer, and which appears from authentick Records to have been called about 200 years ago Palus or the Marsh, was discover'd not long since a large square Stone, which is found upon exact Inspection to be a kind of coarse Marble, of a substance not fine enough to admit of being polish'd, yet harder than our common Quarries afford, and not easily susceptible of injuries from the weather or outward Accident.'

The supposed inscription on the stone consisted of Latin verse in which Walpole was satirized, and the writer inveighed against a

standing army, ridiculed the balance of power, complained of the Government's inactivity, and that 'the Hanover Horse was suffered to suck the blood of the British lion.' According to Sir John Hawkins, one of Johnson's biographers, 'a publication so inflammatory as this could hardly escape the notice of any Government under which the legal idea of a libel might be supposed to exist. The principles it contained were such as the Jacobites of the time openly avowed; and warrants were issued and messengers employed to apprehend the author, who, though he had foreborne to subscribe his name to the pamphlet, the vigilance of those in pursuit of him had discovered. To elude the search after him, he, together with his wife, took an obscure lodging in a house in Lambeth Marsh, and lay there concealed till the scent after him was grown cold.'

Boswell contradicts the statement about the issuing of the warrants, and it is quite possible that Sir John Hawkins was mistaken; but whatever trouble 'Marmor Norfolciense' may have brought upon its author, it has established a slight connection between him and North-West

Norfolk, and supplied the writer of this book with an excuse for adorning its pages with Johnson's name.

No account of Houghton, however slight, can be without some reference to the oft-raised question: 'Is Houghton Goldsmith's "Deserted Village"?' The reason why this question is so frequently asked is easily explained. At the time when Sir Robert Walpole began building his new house the village of Houghton was within the park, to which its humble cottages—which were probably wattle-and-daub structures, more picturesque than comfortable or healthy to live in—were not considered to be an adornment, nor their presence so near the Hall in every way desirable. So in 1729 the first of the houses still standing just outside the south gates of the park was built, and in the course of a few years the inhabitants of the old village had all removed into a new one. Whether it was found necessary to evict anyone from his old homestead is now unknown, but, according to Mrs. Herbert Jones, who has dealt with this matter in her 'Some Norfolk Worthies,' hints have survived of shattered homes and broken hearts, and a field

not far from the Hall is still called 'Naboth's Vineyard,' from the tradition of its owner's misfortunes. That the houses built by Sir Robert are more commodious and healthy than were the old ones no one who knows what many of the very old cottages in Norfolk are like can doubt; but it is more than probable that the circumstances attending the demolition of the old homesteads caused hard things to be said about the lord of the manor, and, as Mrs. Herbert Jones remarks, it is not unlikely that Goldsmith was thinking of this act of the great Prime Minister when he wrote in his 'Traveller':

> 'Have we not . . . . . .
> Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
> Lead stern depopulation in her train,
> And over fields where scattered hamlets rose,
> In barren solitary state repose?
> Have we not seen at pleasure's lordly call,
> The smiling long-frequented village fall.'

It has been rightly urged that these lines apply with at least equal aptness to the Irish village of Lissoy, where Goldsmith passed his childhood, and where a certain General Napier, or Naper, is said to have caused some cruel evic-

tions in order to improve his estate. But even the comparatively private acts, both good and bad, of such a man as Sir Robert Walpole were bound to be familiar to many of his contemporaries, and Goldsmith cannot but have heard something about the circumstances which attended the erection of Houghton Hall. At any rate, the quoted lines and many others in the 'Deserted Village' apply so well to Houghton and what happened here that it is hard to believe Goldsmith was unacquainted with this episode in its history.

Horace Walpole, the 'most eccentric, the most artificial, the most fastidious, and the most capricious of men,' as Macaulay describes him, is buried beside his father in the parish church, and his portrait hangs in the Hall; but during the manhood to which some may think he never attained, though he lived to be eighty years old, Houghton saw little of him. At the General Election of 1754 he was returned to Parliament for the borough of Castle Rising, and subsequently he represented Lynn, for which town his father had also been a member, but his visits to Houghton were few and far between. He

came here, however, while contesting a Lynn election, for on March 25, 1761, we find him writing to George Montagu :

'Here I am at Houghton ! and alone ! in this spot where (except for two hours last month) I have not been in sixteen years ! . . . Here I am, probably for the last time of my life, though not for the last time ; every clock that strikes tells me I am an hour nearer to yonder church—that church into which I have not yet had courage to enter, where lies that mother on whom I doated, and who doated on me ! . . . There, too, lies he who founded its [Houghton's] greatness, to contribute to whose fall Europe was embroiled.'

Horace did not stay long here, though 'Gray and forty churchyards' could not furnish so many reflections as Houghton ; for six days later he was at Epping, having in the meantime been to Lynn and become its Member of Parliament. There, he writes pathetically, he had been 'the subject of a mob . . . addressing them in the town-hall, riding at the head of two thousand people . . . dining with above two hundred of them, amid bumpers, huzzas, songs, and tobacco,

and finishing with country dancing at a ball and sixpenny whist!'

He bore it all cheerfully, he tells us, and even agreed to go and see an alderman's copies of Carlo Maratti. It never seems to have occurred to him that far better men had done likewise and said nothing about it.

Horace Walpole died on March 2, 1797, and with him the male line of Sir Robert Walpole and the title of Orford became extinct. In the Houghton burial register there was the entry: 'The Right Honourable Horace Walpole, late Earl of Orford, was buried March ye 13th, 1797. A Bachelor;' but this entry has been cut out.

Concerning George, third Earl of Orford, some curious tales are told. One of his most extravagant performances was the training of four red-deer stags to run in a phaeton, and on one occasion he started to drive this peculiar team to Newmarket. All went well until a pack of hounds appeared on the scene, and at once gave chase to the stags, which promptly 'bolted' with the hapless Earl. Fortunately for him, the stags were used to being 'put up' at the Ram at Newmarket, and it was into the yard of

that well-known hostelry that they finally bounded, to the amazement of all onlookers. One or two of the latter, however, were quick to discover the cause of the 'mad Earl's' curious plight, and he with his stags and phaeton were bundled into a barn just as the hounds rushed into the yard.

The appearance of this Earl of Orford at any Norfolk sporting gathering invariably caused a sensation. He would come, one of his contemporaries says, 'mounted on a stump of a piebald pony (as broad as he was long), in a full suit of black, without either great-coat or gloves; his hands and face crimsoned with cold, and in a fierce cocked hat, facing every wind that blew, he rode, regardless of the elements and the sand-gathering blasts of Norfolk.' His mental aberration on two occasions became so serious that he had to be put under restraint, and eventually his general health became exceedingly bad. Yet still his sporting instincts were uppermost, and his chief grievance was the confinement which prevented his attending coursing matches. On the day of his death, with a madman's cunning, he contrived to escape from his keeper, saddle his

favourite piebald, and hasten to the coursing field, where Czarina, one of his best greyhounds, was to compete that day. Some of his friends tried to persuade him to return home, but without success. His excitement during the matches was great, and when he saw that his favourite dog had won, it became too much for him. He fell from the saddle, and died almost immediately. Notwithstanding his peculiarities, he had many friends, and even the fastidious Horace had to confess that 'no man ever felt such a disposition to love another as I did to love him.' He it was who instituted 'The Houghton Meeting' at Newmarket, and outdoor sport in almost every form had his enthusiastic support. He revived that most difficult branch of hawking 'kite-flying,' and probably practised it at Houghton. Bellamy, in his 'Treatise upon Falconry,' states that Lord Orford was reported to have spent £100 a year upon each of his hawks, and as he kept a great number of them, their cost must have amounted to thousands annually; the same writer adds that each hawk had its own falconer. John Daams, the first Dutch falconer introduced into England, was in the service of Lord Orford,

who was one of the founders, and at least once the 'manager' of the year, of a Falconers' Club. According to his uncle Horace, 'his whole pleasure' was 'outrageous exercise'; but to Horace even an ordinary amount of outdoor exercise probably seemed 'outrageous.'

Before leaving Houghton we must at least glance into the little church in the park. There was a church standing on its site at a very early date, for we are told that about 1271 Houghton church was partly rebuilt by Ralph de Walpole, who was Vicar here at the time, and afterwards Bishop of Norwich. The piers and arches of the church of that date remain, but the rest is of much more recent date. The north aisle was built by Thomas Walpole, who died in 1513, and the tower in 1729 by Sir Robert Walpole. Since then the nave has been reseated with oak benches and the chancel restored, during the course of which restoration an aumbry was discovered, and is still to be seen in the chancel. That the church was for many generations the burial-place of the Walpoles is proved by the inscriptions on the black marble slabs in the floors of nave and chancel, for among the names

we find there are those of several representatives of the family. But to neither the great Prime Minister nor his son, the 'incomparable Horace,' is there any monument. Not far from the spot where they rest, however, there is a remarkable one in the shape of a recumbent effigy of an abbot or a prior, wearing the Augustinian garb, lying upon a marble coffin-lid, with a pillow beneath his head, a cross clasped to his breast, and his feet resting upon a demon. There is a tradition that this effigy was brought here from Cokesford Priory soon after its dissolution. It dates from about the reign of Edward I., and may possibly represent some member of the Walpole family. Apart from this, there is little in the church to detain the visitor; but a shield of stained glass in one of the windows of the south aisle should be noticed; it bears the arms of Walpole and Robsart.

CHAPTER VIII

DESCRIBES CASTLE RISING AND THE ROAD TO LYNN

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DESCRIBES CASTLE RISING AND THE ROAD TO LYNN

In the midst of that part of North-West Norfolk lying to the south and south-west of Sandringham there is one village which rivals even that notable Norfolk village Castleacre in interest, and that is Castle Rising. It is distant about three and a half miles from Sandringham, about two miles east of North Wootton Station on the Great Eastern line, and the same distance north-east of Grimston Road Station on the Midland and Great Northern; but the road leading to it from Sandringham is such a pleasant one, and the journey such a short one, that everyone who wishes to enjoy the excursion as only a pedestrian can should certainly travel on foot to Rising, even if he return by rail. He

can then visit Babingley Church on his way, and, in addition to having stood within the walls of the famous castle in which Queen Isabella spent the quietest years of her reckless life, he will have visited the spot where the first Christian missionary who came to East Anglia is traditionally recorded to have commenced his glorious crusade.

Assuming, as before, that the visitor to Sandringham has his headquarters at Dersingham, he has the choice of two roads to Rising—the highway from Hunstanton to Lynn, and a road running south-westward past the Norwich Gates. The former is a pleasant one, owing to its crossing that beautiful expanse of moorland, Dersingham Heath; but as I shall have occasion to lead my readers along it in another chapter, I will now attempt to give them some idea of the latter road.

On reaching the Norwich Gates, the traveller turns to the right, passes on the left Sandringham Church and the residence of Sir Dighton Probyn, and then keeps on with a fir plantation on his right and the park on his left until he comes to a spot where the road forks. The right-

HORACE WALPOLE, FOURTH
EARL OF ORFORD

From the original by Rosalba.

hand road leads to Wolferton, while that on the left is to Rising, and for a short distance further is bordered by the old carstone wall which surrounds the park. Before this wall comes to an end at the West Lodge, a tract of heath opens out on the right—a little wood-girt piece of wilderness where the green-flowered wood-sage and the purple ling bloom luxuriantly on a carpet of gray-green lichen and bright and dark green moss. Then the road dips down between bird-haunted woods, where there are some pretty groups of slender, graceful birches, and opposite the West Lodge, which is backed by the dense foliage of Woodcock Wood, arrives at cross-ways without a sign-post for the traveller's guidance. If he keeps straight on, however, he will be on the road to Rising, and will soon enter the parish of Babingley. In the park wall against the West Lodge there is a stone inscribed, 'I. M. 1839.' The letters, I imagine, are intended to indicate the name of Mr. John Motteux, into whose possession the Sandringham estate passed in 1834, soon after the death of Mr. Hoste Henley.

Beyond the West Lodge the road rises slightly,

and on the right the view opens out again, gleams of the sunlit waters of the Wash being seen beyond richly-coloured tracts of heathery moorland, dusky belts of firs, and distant marsh-lands. Then the road dips down again to cross-ways, where the railed-in base of an ancient wayside cross stands in the midst of the few houses which comprise the village—if village it can be called—of Babingley.

Here, if Babingley Church is to be visited, the road to the right must be taken. But the church towards which the traveller is directed is not the small one seen on the right of this road, for this small church—a corrugated iron, thatch-roofed building, covered with climbing plants, which have given it a prettier appearance than that of any other like building I know of—was erected by the King about eight years ago, for the accommodation of the villagers, who could no longer worship in the ruined parish church. Some comfortable-looking modern cottages stand nearly opposite the new church, and a few steps further, on the same side of the road, there are traces of what appears to have been a square moat in a meadow adjoining the

BABINGLEY CHURCH AND MARSHES

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road. But there is a larger moat close by—a moat on the banks of which the primroses bloom in April, and the dignified little pied wagtails strut for hours together. It surrounds Babingley manor-house, the residence of Mr. E. W. Betts, and one of those picturesque old houses with crow-step gables which have a charm about them that few modern houses, however fine and pleasantly situated, possess. The manor-house must be at least 300 years old, for it has a quaint porch which cannot be of more recent date ; but the house was refronted with carstone by Mr. Hoste Henley, to whom it belonged while he owned the Sandringham estate.

From the neighbourhood of the manor-house a rough cart-track leads across some low-lying meadows to the ruined church, which stands on the border of a tract of marshland, through the midst of which winds a little stream known as the Babingley River. That it is a deserted sanctuary is seen at a glance, for the glass is gone from its windows, several of which are without tracery ; the chancel is ivy-grown and roofless, and the nave is dismantled and forlorn. Seen as I last saw it, under a sombre, lowering sky, that

cast a depressing gloom over the level marshlands, it had the appearance of having been long deserted; but it was used, I believe, until a few years ago, and into its churchyard the inhabitants of Babingley still are brought to sleep their last long sleep. If there be any truth in the tradition which attaches to the church, one cannot help thinking what a pity it is that a building with such associations should have been allowed to fall into decay.

In an earlier chapter brief reference is made to the tradition which gives a peculiar interest to Babingley Church. It is dedicated to St. Felix, and is said to occupy the site of the first church erected by that ardent missionary after he landed in East Anglia.

It was King Sigebert who invited Felix to this country, and he arrived in the year 631, and was ordained Bishop of the great East Anglian diocese. He is supposed to have landed in the neighbourhood of Babingley, and to have founded a church here as the first act of his crusade against paganism; but although the tradition was handed down from century to century, we find no written reference to it until the sixteenth

century. It is alluded to by Sir Henry Spelman, the Elizabethan antiquary, whose residence at Congham, which is only a few miles from Babingley, probably enabled him to acquaint himself with the legend; and Camden states that the first Christian church 'Felix is said to have built at Babingley, where he landed.' The name of Felix seems to have survived in that of Flitcham, the parish with which that of Appleton is now united; and as no evidence has been forthcoming to discredit the tradition which has been so long cherished, there seems to be no reason why it should not still be accepted.

After noting that there are traces of Norman work in the church—the sedilia being of that period—and glancing into the porch, where the dainty little wall-rue fern grows in profusion, the traveller may return to the main road to Rising, which he left when he turned aside against the base of the old roadside cross. A half-mile or so will now bring him into Rising; but before taking the turn to the right which he comes to before crossing the little bridge spanning the Babingley River he should notice, a short distance from the left-hand side of the road, the old Hall, which

the Queen converted into a convalescent home for officers invalided home from the war in South Africa, and which is still fitted up as a hospital connected with the Sandringham estate.

The first building one sees on entering the delightful old village of Rising is a notable one. It adjoins the road on the left, and attracts attention at once by its quaint style of architecture. To appreciate fully how quaint a place it is the visitor must pass under the archway in the centre of the front of the building and enter the courtyard within. He will then see that the building is an almshouse, somewhat resembling in its arrangement the picturesque old fishermen's hospital in the market-place at Great Yarmouth. It is known as the Trinity Hospital, or the bede-house, and dates from 1614, when it was founded by Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, for the accommodation of a governess and twelve poor spinsters of Rising, North Wootton, and Roydon. The rooms for the inmates are seen on the right and left after entering the courtyard, and connecting them is the main building, containing the matron's quarters, the dining-hall, and a curious little chapel, in which prayers are read

THE BEDE HOUSE AT RISING CASTLE

Looking through the archway into the courtyard.

GORDON. 1ST ME.

every morning. This tiny chapel has the arms of the founder in stained glass in one of the windows, and is fitted up with old poppy-head benches. The dining-hall—now, I believe, only used on special occasions—retains its original massive oak table, chairs, and benches ; but here interest chiefly attaches to a fine old carved wardrobe ; for on peeping into it one sees carefully packed away therein a number of scarlet cloaks bearing the badge of the Earl of Northampton, some blue gowns, and several of those quaint-looking steeple-crowned beaver hats, the shape of which instantly suggest Welsh peasant women and the frolicsome witches depicted in illustrated editions of the ' Ingoldsby Legends.' The natural assumption is that these curious articles of Jacobean costume have been preserved here since the early days of the existence of the bede-house, but such is not the case ; for now, as in the past, the inmates of the house wear these quaint garments every Sunday, when the inhabitants of Rising see a little procession of ancient dames, attired in the dress of the peasantry of the reign of James I., making its way towards the parish church. But the inmates of the bede-house are

not all spinsters nowadays, for the regulations in regard to admission into the house have been altered to admit of widows benefiting by this charitable institution.

The founder of the bede-house is recorded to have been an eccentric character, and the stipulations he made concerning the admission of the 'poor spinsters' into the almshouse testify to the truth of what is said about him. According to the regulations he made, it was essential that every candidate should be of 'an honest life and conversation, religious, grave, and discreet, able to read (if such an one may be had), a single woman, her place to be void upon marriage, no common beggar, harlot, scold, drunkard, haunter of taverns, inns, or alehouses.' Should she be found guilty of 'atheism, heresy, blasphemy, faction in the hospital, injury, or disgracing the assistants, neglect of duty, or misbehaviour in the performance of it,' she must be expelled. There were also rules to the effect that she must hear prayers read by the governess every morning at nine and every afternoon at three; that she must say certain prayers morning and evening, attend church regularly, and never leave the

bede-house without permission. As regards the governess, it was her duty 'to preserve the household stuff of the hospital; to take care of the sick; to deliver out the blue gowns every Sunday and holiday morning, and receive them back at night; to ring the bell every morning and evening for prayers; to shut the gates at prayer-time; to look to the reparations of the hospital, that not so much as one stone be missing either in the walls or upon the hospital by the space of a month; to keep the piece of ground on the north-west side of the hospital next adjoining the walls, and preserve the trees; to keep her garden plot fair and handsome; to reside constantly there; not to lie abroad without licence, nor above seven days with licence in any one year; to give security in £20 penalty to the Mayor of Rising on her admission for the performance of duty; not to permit any stranger to lie in the hospital; and to dine and sup with the poor women in the hall on festival days.'

Just opposite the bede-house, and between it and a kind of village green, stands Rising Church, remarkable for possessing some of the finest Norman work and the ugliest steeple-top in the

county. The church consists of chancel, nave, south transept, south porch, and a central tower. Externally it has a striking appearance, and no one can help admiring the fine and well-preserved Norman work of the west front, which consists of a round-headed doorway with massive zigzag mouldings, above which is some beautiful arcading, with twisted pillars, curiously ornamented capitals, and fine mouldings. The nave is late Norman, and has six round-headed windows on the south side, but none on the north. The tower arches differ curiously, the west arch being of the horse-shoe shape, while that on the east side is pointed. Looking upward into the tower, one sees that one storey opens lanternwise into the church, that in the thickness of the wall are an arcade and gallery, while above is a groined roof, the ribs having zigzag mouldings. The arch opening into the transept is Early English, while the chancel, which has been carefully restored, is Norman, with Early English windows. The transept was rebuilt and its fine stained-glass window inserted in 1883, as a memorial to Greville Theophilus Howard, who died in 1880. This fact is inscribed on a brass in the transept,

CASTLE RISING CHURCH

where there is another brass to Henry Greville Howard, Second Lieutenant of the King's Royal Rifles, who died in Calcutta in 1899. A second brass to this young soldier, erected by his brother officers, is to be seen in the nave, where there is also a mural memorial to Fulke Greville Howard, second son of Baron Templeton. Mr. Fulke Greville Howard took the name of Howard when he married the daughter and heiress of Richard Howard, of Castle Rising, and he died in 1846. The memorial was erected by his tenantry, and the inscription states that 'in him were combined astuteness of intellect, firmness of character, and benevolence of heart. As a husband, friend, landlord, and master, he afforded an example of the qualities which distinguish and adorn a Christian.'

Having examined the fine Norman font, with heads at its angles and interlacing work around the stem, and noticed that the south porch, though in the Norman style, is modern, the visitor will probably be anxious to see the castle; but after passing through the lich-gate, which was erected by the parishioners 'to the glory of God and the loved memory of the Hon. Mary

Greville Howard,' he should turn a few steps aside to glance at the large and picturesque old cross standing in the open space adjoining the churchyard. Then, returning to the lich-gate, he should take the road which was on his left when he passed out of the churchyard, and about two minutes' walk will bring him to the castle, which stands in an enclosure to the right of the road. A charge of sixpence is made for admission to the grounds, which are open to the public from 11 a.m. till sunset.

Rising Castle, which since Norwich Castle was refaced and modernized has been the grandest untampered-with Norman stronghold in the county, stands within a nearly circular ballium 43 feet in height, surrounded by a deep and wide ditch. These immense earthworks, which measure 670 feet from north to south and 480 feet from east to west, are probably of Saxon or Norman construction, though early antiquaries were wont to assign them to Roman, if not prehistoric, times. The keep is reached by way of a stone bridge which spans the ditch, and which has a Perpendicular arch, but earlier piers. Beyond this bridge are the shapeless

THE FONT, CASTLE RISING CHURCH

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ruins of a Norman gate-house. The keep, though the greater part of it is now roofless, is well preserved; the outside walls are nearly perfect, and the windows and doorways in most instances retain their original arches.

The chief entrance is by an arched doorway on the east side. On entering by this door a flight of stone steps is seen, crossed by an arch, and leading up to a square room at the north-east angle of the keep. This room, with the exception of its roof, is almost entirely Norman; it was the vestibule of the great hall, and now contains some cases of curiosities said to have been found in and around the castle. They include two small cannons, an old halberd, old spurs, swords, locks and keys, tiles and pottery. Here, too, are preserved two logs of wood with chains attached. They are said to have been formerly known as 'Roaring Meg' and 'Pretty Betty,' and their use is explained by the writer of a footnote to a map of Norfolk published in 1797. He says:

'Rising is a very ancient corporation, and hath a Mayor and fifty free burgesses. . . . Their Prison is two logs of wood, with a chain to

fasten to the Prisoner, who carries them about where'er he walks.'

The entrance to the great hall was on the west side of the room, which now contains this local museum; the Norman doorway is filled by a fireplace, above which there is some very interesting tiling. A doorway in the north-west corner of the room opens on to a staircase leading up to the roof of the keep, from which a grand view of the Sandringham woodlands is obtained in one direction, and, across the Rising and Babingley marshes, of the Wash in another.

At the foot of the staircase, which must be ascended to reach the vestibule of the great hall, a pointed doorway opens into the basement of the keep. Here it can be seen that, although the exterior of the keep is so well preserved, great havoc has been wrought by time and vandals within. Of the great hall hardly a trace remains; both its floor and ceiling are gone. But a kind of gallery runs partly around the interior, and by ascending to it the visitor is able to examine the various apartments still in existence. Among these is a small room on the west side which has been called the

RISING CASTLE KEEP AND EARTHWORKS

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domestic chapel, but the precise purpose of which is uncertain. On the north side of this room is another, called the guard-room, the sally-port adjoining it being a narrow passage through the wall of the keep. For many years the basement of the keep was filled with the accumulated débris of the various rooms which have vanished; and in 1822, when this débris was cleared away, the bases of some columns were discovered, and also a well 63 feet deep.

Outside the keep on the north side, but within the space enclosed by the earthworks, some fragments of a Norman apsidal chapel are to be seen at a spot where they were brought to light by excavations made in the side of the rampart; and on the south side of the keep there are slight traces of a building which is supposed to have been the quarters of the constable of the castle.

Having seen the castle, it is now time to glance into its history. Its builder was, in all probability, William D'Albini, first Earl of Arundell, upon whose father the Manors of Rising were bestowed by King William Rufus on their becoming forfeit by Odo, Bishop of

Bayeux. This William D'Albini seems to have been known to his contemporaries as 'William of the Strong Hand,' in consequence of a remarkable exploit performed by him, of which the following account is given by the historian Dugdale:

'It happened that the Queen of France, being then a widow and a very beautiful woman, became much in love with a knight of that country, who was a comely person, and in the flower of his youth; and because she thought that no man excelled him in valour, she caused a tournament to be proclaimed throughout her dominions, promising to reward those who should exercise themselves therein according to their respective merits, and concluding that if the person she so well affected should act his part better than others in those military exercises, she might marry him without dishonour to herself. Hereupon divers gallant men from foreign parts hasting to Paris, among them came this our William de Albini, bravely accoutred, and in the tournament excelled, overcoming many and wounding one mortally with his launce; which being observed by the Queen, she became ex-

ceedingly enamoured of him, and forthwith invited him to a costly banquet, and afterwards bestowing certain jewels upon him, offer'd him marriage. But having plighted his troth to the Queen of England, then a widow, (he) refused her: whereat she grew so discontented that she consulted with her maids how she might take away his life; and in pursuance of that design enticed him into a garden where there was a secret cave, and in it a fierce lyon, into which (*sic*) she descended by divers steps, under colour of showing him the beast. And when she told him of its fierceness he answered that it was a womanish and not manly quality to be afraid thereof; but having him there, by the advantage of a folding door, (she) thrust him into the lyon. Being therefore in this danger, he rolled his mantle about his arm and, putting his hand into the mouth of the beast, pulled out his tongue by the root, which done he followed the Queen to her palace, and gave it to one of her maids to present to her. Returning therefore into England with the fame of this glorious exploit, he was forthwith advanced to the Earldom of Arundell, and for his arms the lyon was given

him, nor was it long after that the Queen of England accepted him for her husband.'

It was the Dowager Queen Adeliza, widow of King Henry I., who thus rewarded a noble lover's constancy.

The castle is supposed to have been built about 1176. During the following century it passed out of the D'Albinis' hands, their male line becoming extinct. It then came into the possession of Robert de Montalt, who during his tenure had a curious lawsuit with the Corporation of Lynn, arising out of his claims of the toll-booth and tolls. It appears that one day, during the sixth year of King Edward II., Robert de Montalt and his men were at Lynn, where a certain Nicholas de Northampton and others, 'with banners unfurled,' set upon them and drove them out of the town and into Rising Castle. The castle was then besieged, its doors were broken down, De Montalt was roughly handled, and his assailants carried away with them arms, spurs, a gilt zone, purses with money, and jewels to the value of £40. De Montalt was subsequently compelled 'by fear of death' to abandon all action against the

RISING CASTLE

A view from one of the windows of the keep,
showing the main gateway below.

GORDON HOME

Mayor, the right of appointing a bailiff, and the profits of the toll-booth for twenty years, this compact being entered into by him in the market-place in the presence of a large assembly of townsfolk. Eventually the case came before a higher and probably less interested tribunal, and De Montalt was awarded £6,000 damages.

That the castle was well fitted to become a royal residence is evident, for even in its present state it retains ample indications of its former size and stability. So it is not surprising that when, in 1331, King Edward III. purchased it of Lord de Montalt it was looked upon by its royal owner as a suitable place for allotment to his mother, Queen Isabella, after the murder of King Edward II. and the execution of Mortimer. It may, indeed, have occurred to him that it had the additional advantage of being fairly remote from the scenes amid which the beautiful and passionate daughter of Philip le Bel, after becoming the victim of an infatuating villain, played so terrible a part.

Most of the old historians speak of Rising Castle as Queen Isabella's prison, and until quite recently the compilers of our school histories

adopted their statement that she was kept here under strict guard and surveillance; but modern research among the records of the Lynn Corporation has brought to light facts which more than suggest that she was never kept in very close confinement. It has been proved that she occasionally visited other parts of the kingdom. On one occasion, at least, after taking up her abode at Rising, she travelled to London. In 1344 she was with the King and Queen at Norwich, where, according to the 'Chronicle of a Norfolk Priory,' there was provided for them 'an enormous pie, wondrously large!' Visits were also paid to the shrines at Walsingham and Langley, where, no doubt, she did penance for her sins. Miss Strickland, in her 'Lives of the Queens of England,' asserts that Queen Isabella died at Rising on August 22, 1358, at the age of sixty-three; but in an inquisition made at Salisbury after her death it is stated that she died at Hertford Castle on August 23. Further evidence of the incorrectness of Miss Strickland's statement is found in Queen Isabella's Household Book from October, 1357, to her death, during the whole of which time she was at Hertford Castle.

She was buried in the choir of the Greyfriars' Church within Newgate, where a fine alabaster tomb was erected to her memory ; but there was a tradition which found much credit in Norfolk that she was interred in the parish church at Rising, and even so recently as fifty years ago a stone used to be pointed out as marking the position of her grave. A similar tradition formerly attached to a black slab in Salle Church in Norfolk, where Queen Anne Boleyn was said to have been buried among her ancestors, who for many years were lords of the Manor of Salle.

After the death of Queen Isabella, the gallant Black Prince for a while had possession of Rising Castle ; but from what we know of the stirring life of that heroic soldier, it is evident that he can have spent but little time in his Norfolk home. But his connection with Rising reminds us that it was at Sculthorpe, a Norfolk village not far from here, that one of his ablest Generals came to live when he was over seventy years of age, and his fighting days were done. This brave soldier was Sir Robert Knollys, whom we first hear of in connection with that curious fight between thirty Englishmen and thirty Bretons,

known as the Battle of Trente. We soon hear of him again at Poictiers, and in 1359 he is said to have 'daily wonne many townes and strongholds in Bretagne.' Then for years he fought under the standard of the Black Prince, and during the expedition into France of 1370 he laid waste so many towns and castles that their ruined gable-ends were called 'Knolles' mitres.' But although the army with which he served fought its way up to the gates of Paris, the English cause rapidly weakened, and after the death of the Black Prince Sir Robert Knollys returned to England. His last military service seems to have been rendered to King Richard II., the son of his former leader; this was during Wat Tyler's insurrection in 1381. It was in this year that he became owner of the Manor of Sculthorpe, where he died in 1407, in his ninety-second year.

King Richard II., the next holder of Rising, exchanged the castle for that of Brest, and John le Vaillant, the Duke of Brittany, is said to have paid an occasional visit to his Norfolk stronghold. But two years before King Richard's dethronement it again became Crown property,

A PASSAGE IN THE THICKNESS OF THE WALLS, RISING CASTLE

GORDON
HOPE

and so remained until the reign of Henry VIII., who granted it to Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. On the attainder and execution of Howard for his share in the plots for the release of Mary, Queen of Scots, it was granted to Edward, Earl of Oxford ; but shortly afterwards it was given to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton. Since then it has been held by members of different branches of the Howard family, and it now belongs to Mr. C. A. Howard.

As an interesting village, Rising surpasses almost all others in East Anglia ; but no one would imagine from its appearance it had ever been a town of any importance. Yet there is an old local rhyme which asserts that

> ' Rising was a seaport town
> When Lynn was but a marsh ';

and inquiry into the history of the place reveals that the statement made in the rhyme is not without foundation. Rising's decay as a port was the inevitable consequence of the sea having receded from it, and left a wide tract of more or less dry land between it and the coast. But it continued to send two members to Parliament

until the passing of the Reform Act of 1832, and its local government was in the hands of a Mayor and Corporation until 1835, at which time, it is said, there were only two or three inhabitants qualified for membership of the Corporation, and these used to elect each other in turn to the mayoral office. In 1819 it was written of Rising: 'It was formerly governed by a Mayor, Recorder, High Steward, twelve Aldermen, a Speaker of the Commons, and fifty burgesses. At present the Corporation consists of only two Aldermen, who alternately serve the office of Mayor, and he is the returning officer of two members to the British senate. It has been observed that though at an election five or six names appear on the poll-book, yet it is questionable whether, except the Rector of the parish, there be a single legal voter!'

Sir Robert Paston, who was a learned gentleman much given to travelling in foreign countries and collecting objects of curiosity, before he was created Earl of Yarmouth by Charles II., sat in Parliament as member for Castle Rising. It was he who, in 1664, 'was bold enough to propose to the House of Commons the unprecedented grant

of two and a half millions to the King for a war against the Dutch.'* One of the exciting episodes of his life was an attack made upon his coach one night in 1676 by a band of ruffians, who fired five bullets into the coach, one of which injured its occupant—not mortally, however, for he lived six years longer. He entertained King Charles at his fine house at Oxnead in Norfolk, and his son William, second Earl of Yarmouth, married Lady Charlotte Boyle, one of the King's natural daughters. A subsequent M.P. for Rising was Horace Walpole, the famous son of the great Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole.

Of one of the later Mayors of Rising, Wakefield by name, some entertaining tales are told.

* In a manuscript genealogy of the Paston family the speech made by Sir Robert Paston is preserved, and to it is appended the following note: 'The House of Commons upon this speech passed a vote for the said sum of two millions and a halfe, and ordered that Sr. Robert Paston should have the honour to present the Bill to His Majesty in the House of Lords, which he did accordingly with his own hands. And the same night the King sent for him to Whitehall, and in his bedchamber expressed to the said Sr. Robert Paston all the kindness imaginable for this his great service to the Crown.'

On one occasion a bearer of important despatches from London arrived here in hot haste, and, on inquiring for the Mayor, was informed that he was engaged in the exercise of his 'high calling,' which was that of a thatcher. On being addressed by the messenger, Wakefield called out from the top of a barn roof: 'If it is John Wakefield the thatcher you want to see, I'll come down at once; but if it is the Mayor of Castle Rising you have business with, you must come up here to me.' On another occasion, while he was taking a load of hay to Lynn, a truss fell from the load, and he called to a passer-by for assistance. This the man addressed seemed quite indisposed to render, for he drew himself up to his full height, and asked the waggoner if he knew he was speaking to the Mayor of Lynn. 'Man,' replied Wakefield, 'that don't make no odds; I'm the Mayor of Castle Rising! Now will you lend me a hand?'

To reach North Wootton Station, which is the nearest from which the return journey to Dersingham can be made, the visitor must leave the village by a road branching off from the main street near the post-office. A little way down

this road he will arrive at a spot where, by looking back, he can enjoy what is probably the best view of the castle. He must then take the second turn to the right, where he will be on a road which crosses a sandy heath with patches of heather extending up to the bounds of North Wootton, a village with several old weather-toned red-brick cottages and some picturesque farmsteads. Here the church and everything in it is modern, for it was built as recently as 1854 by the late Hon. Mrs. Howard, of Castle Rising. It is in the Early English style, and its font is a copy of one in the church at Weston in Lincolnshire. The station is just beyond the church, and stands on the border of a wide expanse of marshland which has been reclaimed from the Wash.

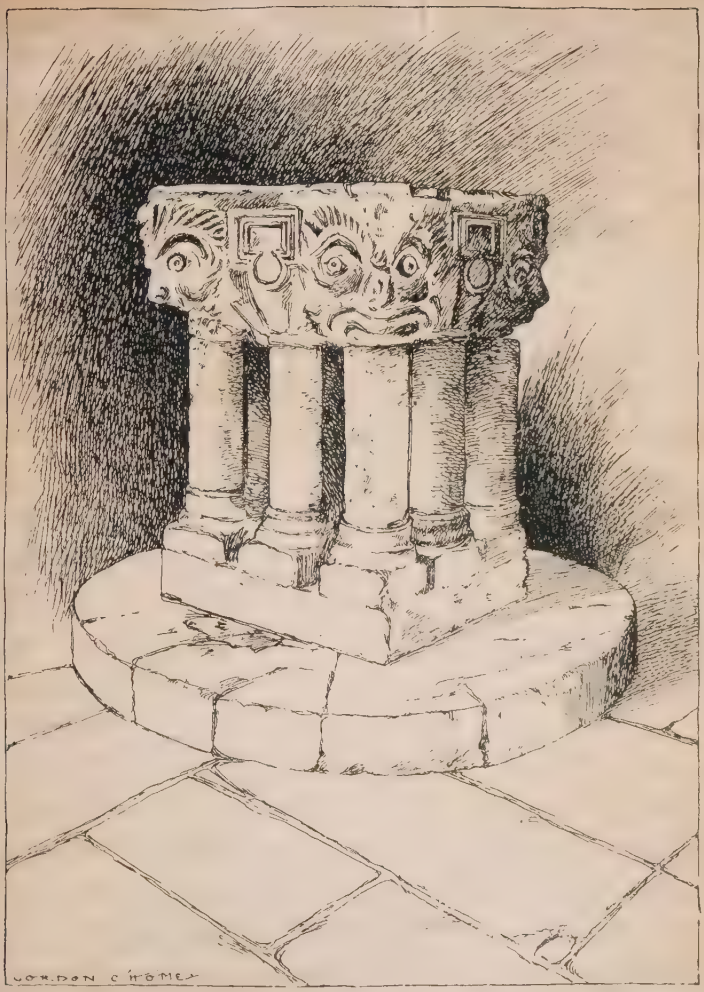
* * * * *

In most instances Castle Rising is visited by tourists in the course of a road journey between Lynn and Sandringham ; so, as a portion of the road has already been described in this chapter, it may be convenient to some readers if a few remarks are made here upon that part of the road which lies between Rising and Lynn. The

distance between the two places is only about four and a half miles, and after leaving Rising the traveller passes through only one village before reaching Gaywood, which is a suburb of Lynn.

In taking this route, instead of turning to the right after leaving Rising, he continues straight along the main road, which for a little way is bordered by heathlands and coverts belonging to the Rising Hall estate. The road is a pleasant one, especially before the leaves of the trees have lost their early summer freshness, or when the heather is in bloom ; but there is nothing along it claiming particular attention until a point is reached about two miles from Rising, where the village of South Wootton is entered. This is an ancient village, as the appearance of some of its cottages and farm-buildings testifies ; but its interest for the visitor is almost confined to its church and some fragments of its old Hall. These closely adjoin one another, but to visit them the main road must be abandoned for a while, and a by-road taken which branches off to the right just beyond that part of the village which borders the highway. A few minutes'

THE FONT AT SOUTH WOOTTON


GORDON C. HOMEY

walk down this by-road brings the traveller to the church.

South Wootton Church is rather large when compared with many of the country churches in Norfolk, but it is scarcely likely to impress anyone who has recently seen the finer churches at Snettisham, Dersingham, and Wolferton. It is not, however, without interesting features. It retains some good work of the Decorated period, and if it were not for a remarkable mausoleum built on to the north side of the chancel, it would strike one as being fairly well proportioned. On being entered by the south door a fine Norman font at once attracts attention by the curious carving on its bowl. This carving should be particularly noticed, and especially the faces at the angles, the expression of which can only be appreciated by stooping down and looking up at them. The bowl is supported by circular shafts. Just inside the door, too, one cannot help noticing a peculiarly gruesome-looking bier, dating from 1611, and 'decorated' with representations of a skull and an hour-glass, as well as being inscribed with the name of the donor and some admonitory texts. These inscriptions are likely soon to

become indecipherable, so, as the bier is probably one of the oldest preserved in this country, it may be as well to give them here. They are as follows:

'Ex dono Henrici Kidson: Rector de Soth Woottonn: Anno Dom. 1611. Vbi vixit annos 41, ætatis suæ 65, Deo et ecclesiæ dedicauit.

'Fashione not yourselues like unto this Worlde: Rom. 12, 2. For the fashione of this worlde goeth awaye: 1 Cor. 7, 31. But the worde of God endureth for ever: 1 Pet. 1, 25.

'It is appointed unto men that they shall once dye, and after that cometh the Judgement: Heb. 9, 27.

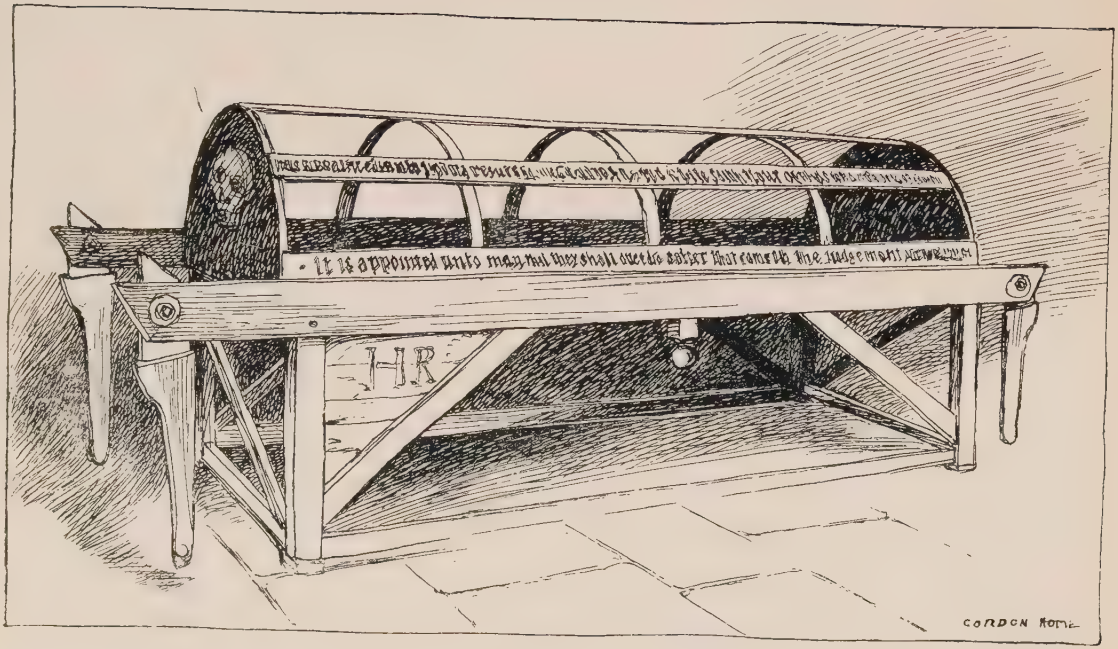
'I desire to be loosed, and to be with Christ, which is best of all: Phil. 1, 23. For He is able to subdue all things to himselfe: Phil. 3, 21.

'We shall be changed in a moment. The trump shall blow, and the dead shall rise incorruptible: 1 Cor. 15, 52.'

It will be noticed that, although this bier dates from 1611, the rendering of the texts is not in accordance with that of the Authorized Version, first printed in that year.

On the north side of the chancel there is a large recessed tomb, bearing on its east end the inscription, 'Thomas Winde Armiger obiit

THE CURIOUS OLD BIER PRESERVED IN
SOUTH WOOTTON CHURCH


HR
GORDON ROME

Sexto die IVII A.D. 1603.' There are also several memorials to the Hamonds, whose mausoleum is outside the church.

From the dates on the black marble slabs in the church and in the mausoleum it is evident that the Hamonds were for a long time connected with South Wootton. One of them, Anthony Hamond, married Susan, the youngest sister of Sir Robert Walpole, and her daughter, Susan Hamond, became the wife of James Hoste, of Sandringham. What is left of their old home can be seen from the churchyard on the south side, where some dilapidated portions have been converted into cottages. These remains are rather picturesque, and I learnt from one of the cottagers that more than one artist has made them the subject of a picture. A stone on a gable is inscribed: 'N.H. 1665.' A gaping hole under one of the walls lets light into the cellars of this home which the descendants of an ancient family have long deserted.

Between South Wootton and Gaywood, near a farm seen to the left of the road just beyond the bounds of South Wootton, there is a spot called Reffley Spring, to which a certain amount

of interest attaches ; for during the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth Reffley Spring was a famous and popular resort of the townsfolk of Lynn and visitors to this neighbourhood on account of the medicinal qualities of its waters and its pleasant surroundings. Here in the reign of George III. it was the custom of the fashionable people of the neighbouring town to come and sit beneath the trees, and, while the music of a band set the young folks dancing on the green, discuss the victories of Nelson and Wellington, the statesmanship of Fox and Pitt, the poetry of Byron, Wordsworth, and Shelley, and the splendid romances which were then being given to the world by the 'Wizard of the North.' Some idea of the scenes then to be witnessed around this now forsaken spring can be gained from the following grandiloquent remarks of a writer who saw Reffley at the height of its popularity :

'The fine majestic wood and mineral spring of Reffley, distant from Lynn about two miles, have long afforded the inhabitants of that town and its neighbourhood a delightful retreat, where, in summer's sultry days, amidst its shady recesses,

surrounded by sylvan scenery and greeted by the melody of birds, they can forget awhile their serious cares, and unbend the mind by friendly and jocund converse over the social bowl (the contents of which yield an additional relish by the peculiarly grateful flavour which Reffley's limpid fountain bestows), whilst the cheerful song, the enlivening minstrelsy, and the sprightly dance, occasionally impart their attractive influence.

Travellers from all parts of the kingdom have long borne ample testimony to the fascinations of this romantic place, and the classic muse has celebrated, in appropriate strains, its picturesque varieties, where Arcadian scenes present themselves in all the luxuriant and wild sublimity of nature. In a sequestered spot, completely overcanopied by the thick, shadowy foliage of trees and bushes, a rural fountain presents itself, in the midst of which arises a handsome obelisk, from whence, by means of an aqueduct, the chalybeate stream is projected ; around this fountain seats are placed, and at a little distance is a public canopy. On the opposite side an octagon temple (built and supported by subscrip-

tion, and appropriated to the accommodation of the subscribers and their friends) stands at the extremity of a small lawn, encompassed by the lofty trees and embowering shrubs, whose wide-spreading and irregular branches are adapted to the purposes of "shelter and shade," affording at once an interesting picture and an agreeable influence.

In August, 1818, the members and friends of Reffley met and dined together in a pavilion erected upon the lawn fronting the temple, to celebrate the return to Parliament of Sir Martin Browne Folkes, Bart., one of the members for the town, the proprietor of the soil and wood of Reffley, and the patron of the spring; and also in compliment to him for erecting a new canopy there, and for other improvements bestowed upon the place, and indulgences granted to its visitants.'

Reffley was, no doubt, a pleasant spot in those days, and even now, though its glory has departed, an hour can be enjoyably spent in the undulating meadow which is bordered by the 'fine majestic' wood. From the base of the 'handsome obelisk'—which resembles a

Cleopatra's Needle in miniature—the spring still pours its waters into a basin of stone; while close by is a building, unsightly in the extreme, fronted by two Sphinxes. This building is called Reffley Temple, and, according to an inscription on it, was erected by a Friendly Society in 1789 and enlarged in 1831. But of the 'public canopy' (Can it have been of the nature of a flower-show marquee?) there is no trace. The obelisk, the temple, and a so-called stone table, 'presented to the members of Reffley by a friend' in 1778, are all that now remain of Reffley's once famous spa.

The traveller towards Lynn has scarcely left Reffley before the main road becomes suburban in aspect, and after the first house in Gaywood is reached there is little else but houses for the rest of the way to Lynn. In the main street of Gaywood there are one or two old houses worth a passing glance; and a little further on, to the left of the road, there is a building which at once reminds one of the old bede-house at Rising. This building comprises the Gaywood almshouses, and is sometimes called the Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen, having been founded, it

is said, by a Peter Cappellanus so long ago as 1174. The present almshouses date from 1649, and afford accommodation for twelve inmates and a 'reader.' Gaywood Church has no very noteworthy feature apart from a Norman doorway.

CHAPTER IX

TREATS OF WOLFERTON VILLAGE AND DERSINGHAM HEATH

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For the lover of wild life and the pedestrian who, like the gipsy, Jasper Petulengro, numbers among the sweet things of life 'the wind on the heath,' there is no more delightful ramble in North-West Norfolk than that from Sandringham or Dersingham to Wolferton, especially if, in going or returning, the rambler crosses that breezy and beautiful tract of richly-coloured moorland, Dersingham Heath. Indeed, for the 'child of the open air,' who is content so long as he can breathe the resinous odour of the pines, hearken to the singing of birds, and watch the ways of the wild creatures of meadow, moor, and woodland, the journey to and from Wolferton is likely to provide very pleasant recollections for future days.

For this, as for previous rambles, I would recommend that a start from Dersingham be made by way of the Norwich Gates. For a short distance the road is that along which I conducted my readers when they visited Castle Rising. Sandringham Church and rectory-house and the residence of Sir Dighton Probyn are passed on the left; but where the road first forks the right-hand road is taken, for this is the road leading direct to Wolferton, the chief station for Sandringham. Like most of the roads by which the King's Norfolk home is approached, it is bordered by plantations of larch, birch, and fir, the trees here being well-grown and having an abundant undergrowth of bracken. Here and there, however, a glimpse of the original heathland is obtained, and one can form some idea of the tawny wilderness that existed here in the early part of the last century. As one rambles along, enjoying the scent of sun-scorched heath and pine, one hears continually the shrill challenge of the cock pheasant, the 'yiking' of the woodpecker, and the brooding note of the wood-dove; frequently, too, one distinguishes the singularly piercing call-note of the smallest

THE ROAD FROM WOLFERTON STATION
TO SANDRINGHAM

The Wash in the background.

GORDON C HOME

of European birds, the gold-crested wren, which abounds among the firs. Nor is it infrequently that the song of the nightingale causes the traveller to walk with laggard feet, for in early summer many nightingales have their home here. So, what with listening to the birds' songs, watching the rabbits which at his approach scurry off into the fern, and the pheasants which with a befitting dignity leisurely seek the same cover, the traveller is not likely to find the two miles to Wolferton very long ones.

Between the neighbourhood of Sandringham Church and that of Wolferton Station only one house stands by the roadside. It is a pretty little chalet-like house known as The Folly, and it stands on the crest of a hill called the Sandringham Heights. The Folly, which is now occupied by one of the Queen's former attendants, is not a place to which the public have access—it was really built in order that the members of the Royal Family might be able to enjoy one of the finest views to be had on the King's estate—but should special permission be obtained to ascend to the kind of look-out on the roof of the house, the privileged visitor has an outlook over a tract

of country as little like what Norfolk scenery for the most part consists of as it is possible to conceive. For one looks down upon the swaying tops of the pines which clothe the hillsides, and across wide stretches of heathery moorland to the green pastures which border the sea. In one direction the tapering spire of Snettisham Church is clearly seen rising near the dark woodlands of Ken Hill, while beyond the wide waters of the Wash the tower of St. Botolph's Church at Boston, in Lincolnshire, is also visible on a clear day. In the immediate neighbourhood of the house the scenery is not unlike that of a Highland glen, and, indeed, after viewing the country from this elevated spot, one can well understand how it was that a writer described this part of Norfolk as 'a bit of Scotland brought south of the Tweed.'

Not only are the surroundings of The Folly very charming, but the interior of the house is exceedingly interesting, for here are preserved a considerable number of curiosities collected by members of the Royal Family in various parts of the world; also many sporting trophies, including the tiger which was killed by the King

(then Prince of Wales) when it sprang upon the howdah of an elephant he was riding when in India. The Folly is, in fact, a miniature museum, containing among other things a beautiful little canary-coloured parrot, which was one of the Queen's pets, a fine head of a bison, some cases of brilliantly-plumaged foreign birds, and many sporting trophies which belonged to and were prized by the late Duke of Clarence.

From The Folly it is only a few minutes' walk to Wolferton Station. This is the King's station, and even if the traveller were not aware of the fact he would see at once that it is very different from other country stations; for it has a spacious private approach suggesting the entrance to a park, and this approach leads up to a covered carriage-way in which the members of the Royal Family and their guests alight when they take their departure from Sandringham. The royal waiting-rooms adjoining the departure platform are on the Sandringham side of the line. They include the King's room and the Queen's room, each tastefully decorated and upholstered, and hung with some choice pictures. On the Wolferton side of the line are the arrival waiting-rooms,

which are more modern than the departure rooms, and, with the corridor leading from them to the carriage-way, finely panelled with oak. On this side also the King and Queen each has a private room, the one being furnished with chairs and lounges upholstered with 'sealing-wax' red leather and the other with a rich bright blue brocaded satin. A clock hanging in one of the waiting-rooms was brought here from the first yacht owned by the King. The platforms are paved from end to end; the lamps and even the fire-buckets are of an exceptionally ornate kind; the various buildings are more commodious than the average; and the walls are undisfigured by advertisements of anybody's soap, tea, or mustard. On the Sandringham side of the line an ornamental clock-tower with four faces surmounts the station, the clock being regulated by one worked by electricity in the station-master's room. The station-master, who is also postmaster of Wolferton, occupies a smart little house near the station.

The village of Wolferton is chiefly situated on the west side of the railway, just beyond the station. Like West Newton, it is a model

village, possessing an excellently fitted-up club-house and many well-built cottages, which have been erected by the King. The dwellers in these cottages are chiefly men employed on the land farmed by the King, but some of the tenants are skilled cattle-tenders, who look after the splendid cattle for which the royal estate is widely renowned. Many of these fine beasts are to be seen at the Church Farm, near the station, where there are some famous prize-winning shorthorns, West Highlanders, Jerseys, and handsome little Dexters. It has been my good fortune to see some of these animals, but as it would be presumptuous for one to attempt to describe them whose knowledge of cattle is only just enough to enable him to distinguish between a Jersey and a Dexter, I shall be pardoned for refraining from making any such attempt. I understand, however, that it is a good many years since the King practically commenced farming by rearing Southdowns, and about thirty years since he started a shorthorn herd by bringing some animals from Windsor and making a judicious selection from some of the best Norfolk herds; and it is needless to add that since that

time the King's herd has become second to none in the kingdom, and has carried off the highest honours. The same may be said of the Sandringham Dexters.

This seems a suitable place to mention the well-known fact that for its breeding of shire horses Sandringham is world-famous. The King's shire stud has a great reputation, and has produced some of the finest winning shires that have been seen in the shows. As a writer, whom I have previously quoted remarks: 'Locally it is believed that the storms and winds from the Wash put stamina into the horses. At all events, there is no stud in the country where the horses are treated by hardier methods. After a foal is born, it is kept for from nine to twelve months on the chalk, and then turned out on the marsh, where it winters without any cover whatsoever. Except the stallions, the horses are not brought under cover again. It may be doubted whether this is the best way to secure size and weight, but most undoubtedly there is no better way for getting good constitution, and that is the probable reason why horses do so well after leaving the stud.' The same writer tells us that

DERSINGHAM WINDMILL

in connection with his breeding of shire horses the King's sympathy has taken a most practical turn. His splendid stallions are 'let out at very moderate fees to those who have no connection with the estate, and to the King's tenants free. Every farmer knows that this is tantamount to putting actual cash into the pockets of the tenants. . . . Some of the tenants have done very well indeed by obtaining a good class of horse to match with the royal horses.'

Wolferton Church is only a few minutes' walk from the Church Farm. It is one of those fine and spacious churches, not uncommon in sparsely-populated parishes in East Anglia, suggesting a time when districts now almost depopulated were well peopled. It was chiefly built about 1487, but has some Early English portions ; it is dedicated to St. Peter. Externally it is an imposing building, and internally it is striking on account of its width and lofty nave. The latter has a fine Perpendicular roof, on which the original figures of the Apostles remain. The chancel has a modern roof adorned with carved angels. The church is remarkably rich in screen-

work, the rood-screen being an unusually fine one, while chapels at the east end of each aisle are enclosed by very fine parclose screens, that of the south chapel being especially good, and ornamented with a great number of small and curious heads, or rather faces. There is also an old screen in the tower arch. Each of the chapels retains its piscina, and in the chancel the piscina and sedilia are well preserved. Both the nave and aisles have been reseated with well-designed oak benches; but the chancel retains four old poppy-head bench-ends, and the front choir stalls have old carved panels. Over the chancel arch are some wall-paintings, and there are traces of some old paintings on the wall of the north aisle. A stone bench runs all along the wall of this aisle. Other interesting features are a modern tabernacle font cover, a curious old alms-box near the south door, four ancient stone coffins at the west end of the south aisle, and, in the south chapel, some memorials to the Kerriches, including one, dated 1730, to a child aged two years and eight months. On it are the lines:

> 'This child had longer liv'd if from ye grave
> Beauty or Wit had any power to save.'

Between Wolferton and the Wash there is a fairly wide expanse of level land, reclaimed from the sea. A good deal of it is marshland, and towards Dersingham there are several spots little better than bog; but some tracts have been brought under cultivation. About this area of newly-made land there is little to tempt to closer acquaintance the visitor who gazes across it from the bordering uplands; but its often uninviting aspect ought not to daunt anyone who cares to study bird-life, maritime flora, or marine zoology. For a few minutes' stroll along the rough marsh roadway, which branches off from the main road through the village near a farmhouse known as the Marsh Farm, will bring him to the embankment, or sea-wall, which protects the reclaimed land from the sea. But he must not expect to find beyond this sea-wall a shingly beach or a stretch of golden sand, for not of such are the shores of the Wash. Instead he will see, if the tide be out, an apparently limitless expanse of gleaming—and often steaming—ooze, extending beyond a sombre tract of tide-scoured salt marsh, and broken up into innumerable irregular flats by winding creeks and drains. To one who has

recently been rambling along the pleasant road from Sandringham, reaching the margin of this estuarine waste, which is neither land nor sea, is like suddenly stepping upon the borders of a primeval world not yet ready to be inhabited by man. For miles and miles there is nothing but almost untraversable mud-flat, the haunt of flocks of seagulls, that gorge themselves with the shellfish which swarm in the creeks, cling to every stranded tangle of bladder-wrack, and leave a network of intersecting trails all over the ooze.

It is hard for a prose writer to convey a clear idea of these far-spreading tidal flats, but Mr. Swinburne has given us a poetic expression of what we see here in his lines:

> 'Sharp and soft in many a curve and line
> Gleam and glow the sea-coloured marsh-mosses,
> Salt and splendid from the circling brine.
> Streak on streak of glimmering seashine crosses
> All the land sea-saturate as with wine.'

Away towards the open water seaweeds grow by the sides of the creeks, but near the sea-wall the characteristic salt-marsh flora has established itself. Here, when the tide ebbs, the margins of

the creeks are seen to be overgrown with the unattractive glasswort, or marsh samphire, while higher up the creek-sides the frosty-looking sea purslane, the white-flowered scurvy-grass, and the strong-scented silver-gray sea southernwood grow intermingled and help to hold together the land which is in making. On the firmer tracts, over which a dark-green grass has spread, tufts of dainty sea-pinks are suggestive, even on this sombre waste, of the flower-bed borders in an old country garden. The beds of the creeks are scarcely likely to attract the attention of anyone save an enthusiastic naturalist, for often they are alive with hundreds of large centipede-like larvæ; but for the geologist of a future age these creeks may be preparing an interesting problem. For into them the tides daily bring thousands upon thousands of tiny empty shells, most of them no bigger than cress seed, so that in many of them these bleaching shells lie inches deep, and could only be counted by their myriads. The making of these deposits is interesting, but it is more interesting still to notice that, in places where the sides of the creeks have been scoured away by a high tide, previous deposits of the same

character have formed chalk-like bands, caused by the shells being overlaid by a sedimentary deposit of ooze. In some places several successive bands of this kind are at times to be seen in the sides of a creek.

I would like, if there were space at my disposal, to give some account of the bird-life of the Wash, but the subject is such a wide one that a bare reference to it must suffice. In the early part of the last century the glossy ibis—locally known as the 'black curlew'—was a frequent visitor to the mud-flats, and even now, though something like 250 years have elapsed since they bred in Norfolk, spoonbills—probably stragglers from Horster Meer in Holland—occasionally put strong temptation in the way of the local gunners. In October, 1895, two black-winged stilts visited the Wolferton marshes. With the wild-fowl that afford legitimate sport to the shore-gunner and punt-gunner the creeks and flats often abound; wild geese — pink-footed, brent, and others—are regular winter visitors, and during severe weather pochards, scaup, and scoters are exceedingly plentiful. During the migration seasons great numbers of small wading

birds alight on the mud-flats, rare species being sometimes detected among them. Winter and the migration seasons are the times when the bird-life of the Wash is most abundant, but at no time of the year is there a lack of birds around the great estuary. Common and lesser terns, ringed plovers, wild duck, teal, shoveller, shelduck, and gadwall nest within the area protected by the Wolferton Wild Birds' Protection Society, of which the King is patron. If it were not for the cries of the birds the silence of these seashore solitudes would often be unbroken for days if not weeks together.

* * * * *

To return to Dersingham by the heath road—which is the main road between Lynn and Hunstanton—it is necessary, after leaving the Wash-bordering marshes, to pass again through Wolferton, recross the railway, and continue along the Sandringham road until a crossway is reached, where the road to the left is the heath road. For a short distance it is bordered by plantations, but very soon the view opens out on the left across the tangled wilderness of the heath, and for the rest of the way to Dersingham there is nothing

but heathland on this side of the road, on the other being an undulating tract of what was originally heath, now for the most part overgrown with trees. Formerly there was a large tract of country, extending from Dersingham to Babingley and from the marshes to the bounds of Sandringham Park, which was all open moorland; and at a time not so very remote the western border of this moorland, where it slopes down more or less abruptly to the marshes, was reached at every flood-tide by the waters of the Wash. That such was the case is more evident to the traveller who goes from Wolferton to Dersingham by rail than to the road traveller, for from the train the western slope of the heath is seen to be broken up by deep, wide clefts, such as are seen in a line of cliffs.

At the beginning of the last century Dersingham Heath and the other heathlands of North-West Norfolk were the haunt of some of the native race of great bustards. Indeed, the Norfolk heaths were the last British stronghold of this large and handsome bird; for while it became extinct on Salisbury Plain about 1810, and on the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Wolds about

1826, it survived in this county until 1838. The birds that frequented Dersingham and its neighbourhood belonged to a drove which had its headquarters at Westacre, in which parish an example, now in the Castle Museum at Norwich, was caught in a rabbit-trap in 1831. In earlier times, in all probability, these fine birds were as numerous in Norfolk as anywhere in England; but they appear to have never been very common in this country. For this, it may be, their being a favourite table bird was chiefly responsible. In the Lynn Corporation Accounts for 1371 mention is made of bustards among the gifts bestowed upon Admiral John Nevile; and the Hunstanton Hall household book relates that in 1527 a bustard was 'kylled with ye crosbowe on Wedynsday.' Sir Thomas Browne, the learned author of 'Religio Medici,' who lived in Norwich from 1636 until his death in 1682, writes that 'bustards are not vnfrequent in the champain & feildie part of this country,' and adds that the bustard is 'accounted a dayntie dish.' An example, sold in Cambridge in 1838, was ascertained to have been killed at Dersingham, and to have belonged to a drove of seven, which had

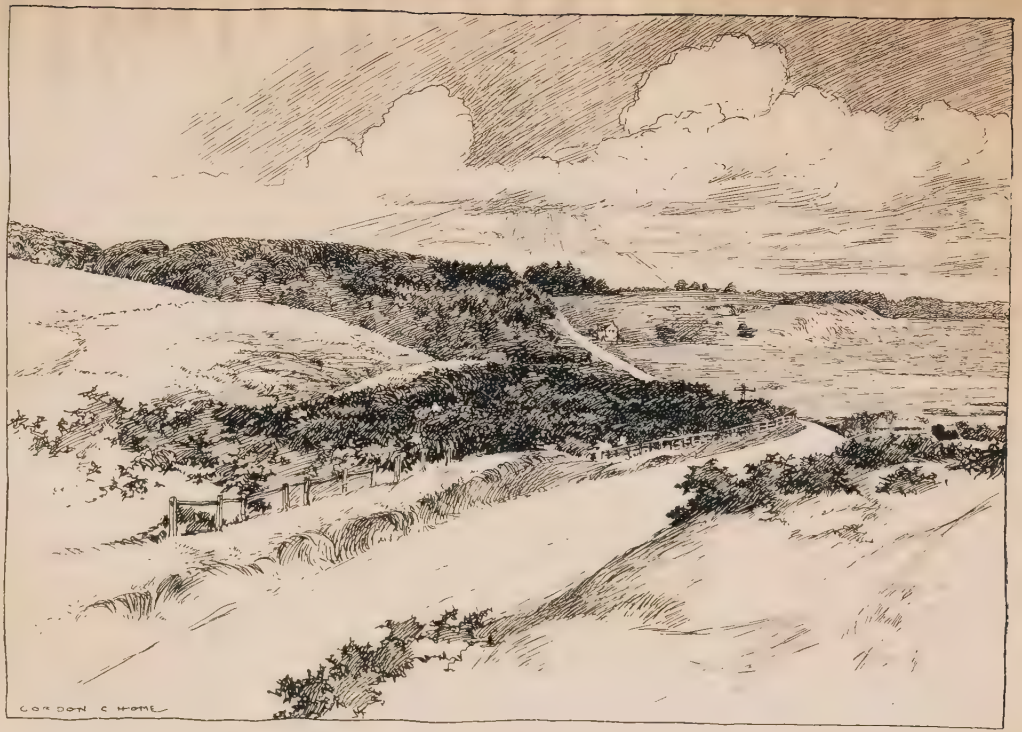
been observed at Hillington, a few miles from the heath. The North-West Norfolk birds appear to have been killed off one by one until only hens were left; but at Wretham, in the south-west part of the county, a wholesale slaughter of them was at one time carried on. There, according to Lubbock, a keeper named Turner, having attracted a drove by placing food for them at a certain place, 'constructed a battery of three large duck guns bearing on the spot where the food lay, and, coming before daylight, secreted himself in a hole dug some hundred and fifty yards from the guns. By means of a long string to the triggers, he used to effect a general discharge on the first favourable opportunity, and in this way he once obtained seven bustards at a shot.'* The last of the Norfolk great bustards—and therefore the last of the indigenous British race—was killed at Lexham, near Swaffham, in May, 1838. From time to time attempts have been made to reintroduce the species, but without success.

Had a drove of great bustards survived at

* 'Observations on the Fauna of Norfolk,' by the Rev. R. Lubbock (1845).

DERSINGHAM HEATH

Sandringham lies to the left among the woods.


GORDON C HOME

Dersingham until to-day, it would be as well protected as are those handsome birds the sheld-ducks, which breed in considerable numbers on the heath, usually laying their eggs in the rabbit-holes—a habit which has gained them the name of 'burrow-ducks.' Among the heather and bracken these ducks look curiously out of place; but every day most of them fly down to the Wash, in order to swim and feed in the creeks. A wary bird is the sheld-duck. According to Mr. J. H. Gurney, an old duck will fly straight into her nesting-hole, so that no foot-print on the sand outside may betray her presence or that of her young ones within. A gloomy place the world must seem to the young ones when they are hatched in a nest which is often 10 or 12 feet from the entrance to the burrow; but they enjoy themselves greatly when allowed to go abroad, especially when the mother duck takes them down to the sea. The journey is a long one for them, and of late years, we are told by Mr. Gurney, they have often found an obstacle in their way in the shape of wire-netting. To avoid this obstacle the mother duck—a wild duck, let it be remembered—has even been

known to lead her brood down Dersingham village street !*

Dersingham Heath is a pleasant place on a sunny summer day, especially for one who prefers the primitive aspects of Nature, and it is a glorious place in early autumn, when the heather is in bloom on its hills and the sides of its vales; but it wears its most impressive aspect when the twilight is deepening into night. At sunset there is a sombre grandeur about its tawny ridges, as they stand out against the flaming splendour of the western sky; but after the gorgeous hues of sunset have given way to an amber afterglow, the heath seems, like Egdon Heath, to take to itself more than its share of the gathering gloom of night. Against the western sky its ragged outlines are still to be seen in striking silhouette, suggesting a clearly defined limit to both day and night; but over the surface the darkness soon becomes impenetrable. But though the eye is unable to pierce that darkness, the ear detects slight sounds coming from it. It is as though the heath has a hidden life peculiar to its night. It may be that the sounds are simply

* *Zoologist*, April 15, 1903.

those made by wakeful birds and the little nocturnal creatures which are creeping among the heather and fern; but one somehow gets the impression that the heath has become the haunt of those pixies, gnomes, and other prankish elves which we have taken such pains to drive away from the 'green-sour ringlets' of the pastures and the moonlit glades of the woods. The suggestion of eeriness, however, is not unpleasing; and as one grows accustomed to the sounds, they become to some extent companionable.

CHAPTER X

DESCRIBES THE ROAD FROM HILLINGTON TO SANDRINGHAM

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DESCRIBES THE ROAD FROM HILLINGTON TO SANDRINGHAM

The distance to Sandringham from Hillington, where there is a station on the Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway, is about two and three-quarter miles. In Hillington, which is a village on the Lynn and Fakenham road, there are two places of interest: the church and the Hall. The former is not on the road to Sandringham, but is about five minutes' walk down a road running southward from the station. It is a rather large restored Perpendicular church, with a comparatively modern nave, built in 1824, lacking within it that 'dim religious light' usually associated with old churches. The brightness of the interior is chiefly due to there being no stained glass in the side-windows.

There are several fine tombs and monuments here, especially noteworthy being some mural monuments in the chancel. One of these, on which four kneeling figures are represented, is to Sir William Hovel, who died in 1611, and Sir Richard Hovel, who died in 1653. Facing this monument, on the opposite wall of the chancel, is a large and lengthily inscribed memorial to Sir William Browne, President of the Royal College of Physicians, who died in 1774. Beside this is a large tablet to the wife of the distinguished doctor, who is recorded to have been 'pleasing, placid, personable, prudent, and pious.' Another fine monument is to Sir Edward West, Chief Justice of Bombay, who died at Poonah in 1828; and to his wife, who was the third daughter of Sir Martin Browne Folkes, of Hillington. A large mortuary chapel on the north side of the church contains some massive marble tombs of members of the Folkes family, including Sir Martin Browne Folkes, who was High Sheriff of Norfolk. The floor slabs in the chancel are chiefly to members of the Hovel family who died during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

There are two roads from Hillington to Sandringham, one being to the right and the other to the left of the traveller when he has recrossed the railway after visiting the church. The former is that usually taken; but it is worth while to walk about a quarter of a mile down the left-hand road in order to see the fine-towered gateway of Hillington Park, near which are the remains of four old roadside crosses. The other road skirts the Park as far as the bounds of the village of Flitcham; but the traveller afoot has an advantage over the driver and cyclist in that he is able to avail himself of a footpath crossing the Park to Flitcham from a point near the station. This path is a very pleasant one. On the June day when I last rambled along it the air was laden with the scent of many large hawthorns, so white with blossom that they seemed crowned with snow. The view one gets of the Hall from this path is a fine one.

The Hall, now the seat of Sir William Hovel B. Ffolkes, Bart., is a large and handsome towered and battlemented house, built of carstone with Ketton and sandstone dressings, and dating from 1627, when it was the home of the

Hovels. Since that time it has undergone considerable alteration and enlargement. Adjoining it are some charming gardens, while in the park a small trout stream which has its source in a neighbouring chalk ridge expands into a rather large lake. The Ffolkes family have been at Hillington since the latter half of the eighteenth century, when a Staffordshire ancestor of the present baronet married the only daughter of Sir William Browne, the distinguished doctor whose monument is in the church.

At Flitcham, which is an unattractive village, there was formerly a priory founded for Augustinian canons by Sir Robert Aiguillon in the reign of Henry III. It occupied the site of what is now called the Abbey Farm, a house about a quarter of a mile down a road to the right of that which reaches Flitcham along the border of Hillington Park. Some portions of the monastic buildings are said to be embodied in the modern house; but the only noticeable traces are some fragments of masonry built up into the wall surrounding the garden, and a broken stone coffin-lid placed at the corner of a flower-bed. These slight traces are hardly

worth going out of one's way to see; but the parish church, which is at the opposite end of the village, is a quaint old building which ought not to be left unnoticed. Originally it was a Saxon church, founded by Felix of Burgundy, whose name is said to be perpetuated in that of the village—formerly 'Felix-ham'—and whose connection with this neighbourhood is referred to in another chapter. Of the Saxon building nothing remains, but there are traces of Norman work in the tower. At one time this was a cruciform church, but long ago the chancel was taken down to the foundations, so that the tower, with the ruins of a transept attached to it, is now at the east end of the church, and serves the purposes of a chancel. The interior is plain, and has little interest apart from some quaint old high pews in the aisle. There is a brass inscription on the nave floor to Edward Runthwitt, who was born at Ripon in Yorkshire, and died in 1614.

The shortest route from Flitcham to Appleton is a pleasant footpath running round the east and north sides of the churchyard. This path winds through fields and meadows for about a

mile, and where it brings the traveller on to a road again he will be within a few minutes' walk of Appleton. The road from Flitcham to Appleton is decidedly uninteresting.

Appleton was formerly a separate parish, but it has been united with Flitcham for ecclesiastical purposes. There is some fairly high ground in this erstwhile parish, and on one of the elevated points stands the Hall, formerly a farmhouse, but now the home of Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark. The view from the house is a wide and pleasant one, especially towards West Newton and Sandringham, which lie beyond a rather picturesque valley. Close beside the Hall are the ruins of Appleton Church, consisting of the nave walls and the greater part of a massive round tower.

The name of Paston is inseparably associated with the history of Appleton, for in the sixteenth century the manor belonged to Clement Paston, a distinguished soldier and naval commander who served his country well for many years, and was called by King Henry VIII. 'his champion,' by the Duke of Somerset 'his soldier,' by Queen Mary 'her seaman,' and by Queen Elizabeth

'her father.' He is described by Sandford, the compiler of an old genealogy of the Paston family, as having been 'a man of greate stomache and courage,' who 'served King Henry the eight divers times in his warr, both by land and sea.' When he was a 'very younge man' he was present at the burning of the town of Conquet in France, after which he was made captain of a ship of war; but later on in life he again became a soldier, and fought on 'Museleborough field in Scotlande,' where he was severely wounded and left 'almost for dead.' His most notable deed of prowess seems to have been that of which Sandford gives the following account: 'In a battell fought by sea betweene the French and English, he took a gally of the Kinge of France, and in it he took prisoner the Admirall of France, called Baron St. Blancard, whome he brought into Inglande, and kept him at Castor by Yarmouth till he paid for his ransome seaven thousand crownes over and beside the spoile of the said gallye, where among other things he had a cuppe and two snakes of gould, which were the said Baron St. Blancard's, the which during his life he did upon high daies

weare, and after left the same as a monumt. to his name.' This Clement Paston was the builder of a 'goodly faire house,' of which some traces can still be seen at Oxnead, a parish bordering the upper waters of the Broadland river Bure. He died in 1597, after making a will in which he gave instructions that his funeral was 'not to be costly, nor over-sumptuous, but decent and Christian-like, according to his degree and calling.' Over his tomb in Oxnead Church is a long metrical inscription, in which his capture of the French Admiral is thus referred to:

> 'A peer of France, in spite of all his betters,
> He took in fight, and brought him home in fetters.'

During his lifetime the Manor of Appleton was acquired by his nephew, Sir Edward Paston, who, before the end of the sixteenth century, erected here a fine house, in which he lived till he was over eighty years old. His original intention was to build a house at Binham in Norfolk, on the priory ground which had been granted to his father by Henry VIII.; but the death of a workman, caused by a wall falling upon him, so shocked him that he abandoned the

building, and selected at Appleton another site for his house. His descendants lived here until 1707, when the house was destroyed by fire. According to Peter le Neve, 'the family had all like to have been burnt in their beds if a shepherd had not waked them.' Amid the ruins a large rambling house was built, which stood until after the estate came into the hands of the Prince of Wales, when it was demolished to make room for the present house.

As West Newton and Sandringham constitute so conspicuous a part of the view from the high lands of Appleton there is no need to extend this chapter by explaining the rest of the route to the King's model village and his Norfolk home. The road leading to them is a continuation of that from Flitcham, and until West Newton is entered there is nothing to attract attention save a lofty water-tower, which surmounts one of the Appleton hills and supplies Sandringham House.

CHAPTER XI

RARE PLANTS IN THE SANDRINGHAM DISTRICT

CHAPTER XI

RARE PLANTS IN THE SANDRINGHAM DISTRICT

BY

W. A. NICHOLSON,

Hon. Secretary of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society.

THIS list is compiled mainly from the following sources:

Phytologist, vol. I. (1843), pp. 596, 630: 'Flora of the Neighbourhood of Sandringham,' by J. E. Moxon.

'List of the Flowering Plants in Western Norfolk,' by the Rev. George Mundford in the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, vol. viii. (1842), p. 171.

K. Trimmer's 'Flora of Norfolk' (1866), and supplement to same (1884).

For more modern records I am indebted to manuscript notes of three deceased botanists—viz., Herbert D. Geldart, Dr. John Lowe, and B. Bray. A few have been verified by myself for Dersingham.

Clematis Vitalba, L. (Traveller's Joy).

Thalictrum majus, Sm. (Great Meadow Rue).

Hesperis matronalis, L. (Dame's Violet).

Silene conica, L. (Striated Catchfly).

Silene anglica, L. (English Catchfly).

Stellaria aquatica, Scop. (Water Starwort).

Arenaria tenuifolia, L. (Fine-leaved Sandwort).

Arenaria serpyllifolia, L. var. leptoclados, Guss. (Thyme-leaved Sandwort).

Buda marina, Dum. (Sea Sandspurry).

Claytonia perfoliata, (Donn).

Althæa officinalis, L. (Marsh Mallow).

Geranium pyrenaicum, Burm. fil. (Mountain Cranesbill).

Geranium columbinum, L. (Dove's-foot Cranesbill).

Genista anglica, L. (Petty Whin).

Trigonella purpurascens, Lam. (Bird's-foot Trigonel).

Trifolium scabrum, L. (Rough Clover).

Hippocrepis comosa, L. (Horseshoe Vetch).

Rubus plicatus, W. and N. (Bramble).

Rubus affinis, W. and N.

Rubus hirtifolius,* M. and W., var. mollissimus, Rogers.

Tillæa muscosa, L. (Mossy Tillæa).

Drosera anglica, Huds. (English Sundew).

Drosera intermedia, Hayne. (Intermediate Sundew).

Asperula cynanchia, L. (Squinancy-wort or Woodruff).

Artemisia maritima, L. (Sea Southernwood).

Senecio viscosus, L. (Viscous Groundsel).

Cnicus pratensis, Willd. (Meadow Thistle).

Cnicus acaulis, Willd. (Dwarf Thistle).

Schollera Oxycoccos, Roth. (Cranberry).

Statice Limonium, L. (Sea Lavender).

Hottonia palustris, L. (Water Violet).

Anagallis cærulea, Schreb. (Blue Pimpernel).

Cuscuta Epithymum, Murr. (Lesser Dodder).

* Dersingham, 1902. Mr. A. B. Jackson, Bot. Ex. Club. British Isles, Report, 1902, p. 42.

Hyoscyamus niger, L. (Henbane).

Verbascum nigrum, L. (Dark Mullein).

Digitalis purpurea, L. (Foxglove).

Orobanche minor, Sm. (Lesser Broom-rape).

Mentha gentilis, L. (Mint).

Nepeta Cataria, L. (Cat-mint).

Marrubium vulgare, L. (White Horehound).

Lamium Galeobdolon, Crantz. (Yellow Archangel).

Scleranthus perennis, L. (Perennial Knawel).

Atriplex littoralis, L. (Shore Orache).

Atriplex laciniata, L. (Frosted Orache).

Atriplex portulacoides, L. (Sea Purslane).

Myrica Gale, L. (Bog Myrtle).

Orchis pyramidalis, L. (Pyramidal Orchis).

Habenaria conopsea, Benth. (Fragrant Habenaria).

Habenaria bifolia, Br. (Butterfly Orchis).

Narcissus poeticus, L. (Narcissus).

Galanthus nivalis, L. (Snowdrop).

Ruscus aculeatus, L. (Butcher's Broom).

Convallaria majalis, L. (Lily of the Valley).

Narthecium Ossifragum, Huds. (Bog Asphodel).

Juncus maritimus, Lam. (Sea Rush).

Ruppia spiralis, Hartm. (Common Tassel Pondweed).

Scirpus Caricis, Retz. (Broad-leaved Scirpus).

Rhynchospora alba, Vahl. (White Beaksedge).

Carex Pseudo - cyperus, L. (Cyperus - like Sedge).

Phleum arenarium, L. (Sand Cat's-tail Grass).

Calamagrostis epigeios, Roth. (Wood Small-reed).

Apera Spica - venti, Beauv. (Silky Wind Grass).

Hordeum marinum, Huds. (Sea Barley).

Lastræa cristata, Presl. (Crested Fern).

Osmunda regalis, L. (Royal Fern).

Ophioglossum vulgatum, L. (Adder's-tongue Fern).

Lycopodium inundatum, L. (Marsh Club-moss).

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North Wootton
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